SOCIAL AND POLITICAL THOUGHT IN BYZANTIUM

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SOCIAL AND POLITICAL THOUGHT IN BYZANTIUM

FROM JUSTINIAN I TO THE LAST PALAEOLOGUS

Passages from Byzantine writers and documents

TRANSLATED WITH
AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES
BY

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An aged man is but a paltry thing,
A tattered coat upon a stick, unless
Soul clap its hands and sing, and louder sing
For every tatter in its mortal dress,
Nor is there singing school but studying
Monuments of its own magnificence;
And therefore I have sailed the seas and come
To the holy city of Byzantium.

W. B. YEATS. *Sailing to Byzantium*

PREFACE

Byzantium is guarded by so small a number of reliable troops that even puerile inroads into its territory may often attain success for a time. There is no monopoly in the world of learning; but some sort of equipment may justly be required of any man who would explore a thorny and obscure region with any measure of success.

THESE are the words of the learned historian of Byzantine literature Karl Krumbacher. They are words of wisdom and warning; and one who is not a Byzantinist, and who comes as a tiro into the field of Byzantine studies, may well ask himself, as he attempts to give some account of Byzantine social and political thought, whether his 'inroad' into the territory of Byzantium is justified, and whether he has the sort of equipment which may justly be required of a writer who attempts to handle the matter of Byzantium. I can plead only two justifications—or perhaps I should rather say excuses. The first is that I have long been a student of the history of political thought, if not in Byzantium, at any rate in ancient Greece and in Western Europe; and perhaps such study is some sort of equipment for an account of Byzantine political thought, which, after all, does not differ in kind (though it may differ in detail and emphasis) from other forms and examples of political speculation. The second excuse which I would plead is also personal, and even more personal. I recently finished a work on the history of social and political ideas (largely couched in the form of translations from original texts) during the six and a half centuries from Alexander to Constantine; and being blessed (or vexed) by a desire to go on working, I was naturally led to lengthen my cords and strengthen my stakes by a study of social and political ideas after the age of Constantine, as they developed in the Greek lands of the Eastern Mediterranean on the basis, and under the influence, of the ancient Greek inheritance.

To these justifications, or excuses, I would add two other pleas. One is that I have, for some years past, studied Byzantine history and thought in such literature as I could find—the works of Krumbacher and Ostrogorsky: the works of English Byzantinists

such as J. B. Bury, N. H. Baynes (the master of those who seek to know matters Byzantine), and J. C. S. Runciman;[1] and also (if only in translations) the works of Russian scholars such as A. A. Vasiliev. I also owe a debt to Basile Tatakis's *La Philosophie Byzantine*, a work by a Greek scholar (given to me, if I may mention the fact, by a Greek friend) which guided me to many of the sources from which I have drawn my illustrations of Byzantine thought. The other plea which I would add—but it is an acknowledgement and a confession of gratitude rather than a plea—is that in the later stages of my work I have enjoyed the help and profited by the suggestions of Father Gervase Mathew, O.P., lecturer in Byzantine Studies in the University of Oxford. He is a member of an order (the Dominican Order) which has a tradition of centuries of scholarship, and to which (as in private duty bound, having once been the teacher and friend of one of its members, himself a historian and scholar, Father Bede Jarrett) I cannot but render homage and acknowledge the debt that I owe. To have had a Dominican at my side, and a Dominican who was also a Byzantinist, as I brought this work to an end, was to be reminded vividly of a line in Homer: 'When two men go together, one sees in advance of the other.' Sometimes, it is true, we saw the same thing at the same time, independently of one another, and such times were times of particular comfort; sometimes my companion saw something first, and then told me—and there was sovereign comfort also in that.

I have drawn on legal documents and administrative records, as well as on literary works, in the selection of the passages here translated. More, perhaps, might have been drawn from such documents and records; but as I was concerned with the history of political thought rather than the history of political institutions, I have used these sources only for such passages as served my purpose. Some of the literary writings which I have used are curious rather than profound (the dialogue *De Politica Scientia* which comes early in the book is an example); and I confess that generally the Byzantine writers here represented have not the origin-

[1] I should also like to mention G. Every's *The Byzantine Patriarchate*, which seemed to me to show a subtle insight and sound understanding.

ality or the incision of the ancient writers whom they followed in time and sought to follow (as far as they could) in spirit. But I would commend to the reader's attention most of the matter in Part V, which deals with the last centuries of Byzantium (when the flame of thought burned highest just before it expired), and especially the extracts from the writings of Gemistus Plethon and (if in a less degree) the passages from the two treatises of Thomas Magister. The extracts from the writings of Photius and Psellus in Part IV may also be of interest; but it was not easy to find in their writings passages which were worthy of their ability and their vigour. Perhaps I ought to apologize for using the romance *Barlaam and Josaphat* and the collection of animal fables called *Stephanites and Ichnelates* as examples and evidences of Byzantine political thought, the more as they are both derivatives from the East and not the original products of Byzantine thought; but it seemed to me that the views of kingship which they expressed deserved to be recorded, and I had to reflect that both of them had a considerable vogue (in a variety of translations) in the Latin West as well as in the Byzantine East.

As I end this preface, I cannot but remember that I had said 'Farewell' to my readers in the preface to a previous book; and I feelt hat I ought to apologize for appearing again on the stage after I had announced a last appearance. All I can say is that another bud appeared on the tree which I had thought was barren, and the bud has grown into a book. I commend it, for what it is worth, to the judgement and mercy of the reader.

I dedicate this last fruit of my studies to the memory of my friend Professor Photiades, with whom I served in the Conference of Allied Ministers of Education from 1943 to 1945, and who turned my mind to the study of Greek thought in the long Byzantine epoch of its history. It was he who gave me the book I have mentioned, which became my first guide in the study of this theme; and I owe to his lively mind and ready generosity (he had a rapid Hellenic intelligence and the Byzantine gift of *philanthrōpia*) many other debts which I shall always remember.

E. B.

Cambridge 1956

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PART I

INTRODUCTION

Chapter I

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF BYZANTINE THOUGHT AND LITERATURE

§ 1. It has been said that the thousand years of Byzantine history were a dry desert in the realm of social and political theory. 'For centuries Byzantium did not produce a single political theorist.'[1] 'In the East men did not trouble themselves to theorize about the Empire at all . . . while the West was fertile in conceptions and theories.'[2] These sayings have been challenged. 'Byzantine literature', it has been answered, 'is steeped in political theory, . . . theory . . . concerned with the absolutism which was for the East Roman the only practicable mode of government.'[3] There is truth both in the sayings and in the answering challenge. Byzantium did not produce any *original* political theory; nor did it trouble itself to discuss *rival* theories about the nature of the Empire. But it did preserve and cherish the inherited political theory of ancient Greece, Hellenic and Hellenistic; and it developed and expounded its own peculiar theory of what an emperor was and what an emperor should do—a theory unchallenged and uncontroverted, a theory sole and supreme, and that for the simple reason that ever after the days of Constantine, the first head of the Christian Empire, the emperor was accepted and obeyed as 'a God-grounded power' which was part of the nature of the universe and integral to its divine order.

There is, then, such a thing as Byzantine political theory; but

[1] J. C. S. Runciman, *Byzantine Civilisation*, p. 79.

[2] J. B. Bury, *Selected Essays*, p. 119, following Bryce's *The Holy Roman Empire*, p. 343 (edition 1904).

[3] N. H. Baynes, *Byzantine Studies*, p. 48; cf. also p. 32, 'Byzantine literature is interpenetrated by political thought, i.e. by the theory of East Roman monarchy.'

there is little that is original, and what there is is not vivified—except in times of controversy, which were rare and concerned with rarified issues of theology rather than politics—by gusts of the free air of discussion. The reason why so little of it was original was not the poverty of Byzantine intelligence, which had a subtle and probing power: it was rather the riches and oppressive weight of the Byzantine inheritance from ancient Greece. The more Byzantium shed the Roman or Latin tradition, which was still vigorous in the age of Justinian, and the more it became specifically and particularly Greek, the more dependent did it become on the classical models and the general literature of ancient Greece. Except in the one sphere of theology, where thinkers repudiated the Alexandrine tradition of Origen as too exclusively Greek, too rational, and too philosophical, the scholars of Byzantium were content to be the disciples and copyists of the ancient masters. Classically educated, they succumbed to a tendency which, even in our own days, a classical education often tends to promote—the tendency to think that the whole of wisdom is to be found in the past, and that the duty of the present is to recapitulate and restate 'the wisdom of the ancients'. This tendency is particularly notable in the realm of Byzantine political theory. Here attempts to develop a theory might become mere exercises in the manner and style of Platonic dialogues (see below, p. 63); or more than that and still more sadly (for even to imitate Plato is to spread the wings of thought in the air of free speculation and the heaven of 'Ideas'), they might become pale rhetorical imitations of the admired orations of antiquity—the orations of Isocrates, of Dio of Prusa, of Aelius Aristides, of Themistius, of Synesius. Isocrates, in particular, was a cynosure of Byzantine eyes; but Synesius was also a model (the more as he was a Christian bishop), and it may even be conjectured that Aristides had his imitators.[1]

There was a particular and cogent reason for Byzantine imitation of the orators of antiquity. This was the vogue of rhetoric, which was not only a popular pursuit but also a staple of educa-

[1] On the attraction of Isocrates, see below, p. 54 and pp. 161–2. The influence of Synesius may perhaps be traced in the treatise of Niculitzas, *De Officio Regis* (see p. 125). On Aelius Aristides as a model of imitation, see p. 25 and the Appendix.

tion, as we may see from the writings of Psellus.[1] The use of a lofty style and rhythmical cadences seems to have had a natural attraction, at any rate in antiquity, for the peoples of the Mediterranean. It was the delight of Cicero and the study of Quintilian; but it found its chosen home wherever *Greek* was spoken. It attained a particular vogue in the Eastern Mediterranean during the period of what is called 'the Second Sophistic', the period which began with the orations of Dio of Prusa (*circa* A.D. 100) and continued till well into the fourth century A.D., if indeed it ever ended. A high-flown and musical style, running into excesses of euphuism, and sacrificing matter on the altar of form, became the ambition of writers. This was, in itself, enough to discourage thought and stifle originality; for when men think too much about *how* to write, they think too little of *what* to write. They are mounted, as it were, on a high horse, and they are much concerned with its stepping: they are less concerned with the direction of their going and the race that has to be run.

These natural infirmities of the rhetorical style were accentuated for Byzantine writers by the facts of language and linguistic development. A cleavage arose, and grew deeper and deeper with the process of time, between everyday speech, with its vivacity and solecisms, and the written language which wore as it were 'evening dress' and practised a regular ritual. On the one hand there was the 'demotic' Greek of ordinary life and daily intercourse: on the other hand there was the scholar's Greek, with its 'Attic' vocabulary and grammar and its calculated euphony. Most of the Byzantine writers, as long as Byzantine literature lasted, wrote scholar's Greek. It was almost as if they were writing Greek 'prose compositions' instead of natural Greek. The language they used to express their thoughts was too elaborate and too artificial to be a free channel for thought. One of the reasons (though it is by no means the only reason) for the dearth of an original theory of politics in the East Roman Empire is the simple fact that a writer attempting to state a theory could hardly (if the phrase may be pardoned) 'have got it out of himself even if he had had it in him'—so much was he checked and thwarted by the barriers of

[1] See below, p. 132.

style and the recalcitrance of language. True, there were occasional rebels who refused to write scholar's Greek. Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, for instance, can say to his son, at the beginning of his treatise *De Administrando Imperio*, 'I have not tried to give an exhibition of fine writing, or of an Atticized style swelling out its periods in logic and sublimity: I have rather tried to instruct you in the common and current language.' Similarly Kekaumenos, an officer in the imperial service during the eleventh century, can say in the *Strategicon* which he wrote for his family, 'I have never been at a school of Greek learning, which would furnish me with terms of art and give me instruction in eloquence. . . . I have written my remarks for you and your brothers. . . . I do not write in choice words. . . . My words are perhaps naïve, but . . . really true.'[1] There is a comfort in these protestations of simplicity, and they command a natural sympathy; but they also serve to show how deeply ingrained was the general pedantry of style which led to such apologies. One of the master pedants, as late as the fourteenth century, was Theodore Metochites. To turn from the *Strategicon* of Kekaumenos to the *Miscellanea* of Theodore, and to be immersed in the volubility of his protracted periods, is like turning from the language of Costard, in Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost*, to that of Holofernes, with his Latinisms and his 'odoriferous flowers of fancy'.

§ 2. But it is not only the oppressive weight of the ancient inheritance of Greece, and not only the stifling exuberance of an imitative rhetorical style, which serve to explain the Byzantine paucity of fresh and original writing in the field of social and political theory. The cause lay also, and even more, in the nature and the conditions of the political system of Byzantium: indeed it lay even deeper in the general style of Byzantine life and the general trend of Byzantine ideas. This is a matter which deserves and demands some measure of examination; and such an examination may help us to understand not only what the Byzantine failed to do, but also (and this matters very much more) what they succeeded in doing.

The development of social and political *theory*, in the form of

[1] See below, p. 122.

writings and treatises, depends on the presence and the activity of a current of political *thought* diffused in the people at large. In a word, political theory depends on political discussion—on the canvassing of different views and the debate between rival ideas. The structure of Byzantine life left little room for discussion and debate. In the first place there was no real assembly or parliament to focus issues: the Senate (or *synklētos*), a body composed of past and present officials, was in normal times confined to the function of electing certain officials, and even this limited function was abolished by a *Novella* of Leo VI (see below, p. 99). In the absence of any real assembly there could hardly be any parties; for parties need an assembly—an assembly of some size, and with some measure of competence—if they are to play any effective part in political life. There were indeed quasi-political groups, of the nature of factions rather than parties, which went by the name of 'demes' and were commonly called by the colours they sported (the Blues or the Greens); but these groups were confined to the city of Constantinople, and though in the early days of the Byzantine Empire (and particularly in the sixth century) they professed political views and sought to exercise political influence, they seem to have declined into nothing more than an interest in the games of the Hippodrome[1] and the position of partisans of an athletic side.

Yet if there were no political parties (at any rate from the seventh century onwards) there were certainly *social* tensions, which might seem calculated, by their nature, to produce discussion and debate between different social sections. There was, for example, a tension between the growth of a landowning aristocracy, seeking to extend its estates (estates almost in the nature of fiefs), and the survivals of a free peasantry, tenaciously clinging to the soil. There were the germs, and more than the germs, of a system of Byzantine feudalism;[2] and we might also expect to find,

[1] But they were recognized by the State for some centuries as official partners in the ceremonial of the games.

[2] In Western Europe there were three elements which combined to determine the structure of the feudal system—so far as there was any 'structure' or 'system' in what was essentially a fluid and indeterminate society. They were (1) the tenurial element of the fief, or *beneficium*; (2) the personal element of the relation of lord and man, or *vassalitas*; and (3) the juridicial element of the *immunitas*,

by way of reaction against it, some sort of anti-feudal movement in the nature of an 'agrarian party' or a 'peasants' revolt'. The struggle was there, or rather the menace of it was present; but it remained an underground struggle, and it did not emerge into the open. The issue was left to the emperor and to his 'providence' or forethought; and the emperor tilted the balance, now this way and now that, according to the exigency of circumstances and the military demands of the moment, which might now make him desire a feudal array and now induce him to turn to a peasant infantry. There was material enough for debate; but the providence of the emperor, which always stood in reserve, was sufficient to prevent any public discussion, though it could not prevent a subterranean struggle between social forces or an occasional invasion of imperial prerogatives (and even an occasional invasion of the imperial throne) by some 'over-mighty subject' or group of such subjects, entrenched in large domains and supported by the arms of a body of vassal retainers. (The *Strategicon* of Kekaumenos throws light on the problems which might arise under such conditions; see below, pp. 124–5.)

§ 3. There was one form of discussion which, at any rate in the West, particularly stimulated the development of political theory. This was discussion between Church and State; the process of debate between the representatives of the *sacerdotium* (or priest-

which meant primarily exemption or 'excuse' from the jurisdiction of public courts, but generally came to imply the positive right to hold a private court and to exercise private jurisdiction. Each of these three elements appears in the history of Byzantium (see Vasiliev, *History of the Byzantine Empire*, Eng. trans., pp. 565–79). To the *beneficium* corresponds the *charistikion* of earlier centuries, which from the eleventh century onward came to be called *pronoia*; to the relation of lord and man corresponds the system of *prostasia* or patronage: to the *immunitas* corresponds the *exkousseia*, which is the Latin *excusatio* wearing a Greek dress. But correspondence does not mean identity: the Greek terms, or institutions, had their own specific identity; and if the 'feudal system' was fluid in the West, it was (so far as it existed) even more fluid in the East. On the nature, or the germs, of Byzantine feudalism new light has been recently thrown by G. Ostrogorsky, in a work translated into French by H. Grégoire and P. Lemerle, under the title *Pour l'histoire de la féodalité byzantine* (Brussels, 1954). On the general problems of the land and land-tenure reference should also be made to a contribution by G. Ostrogorsky to the *Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, on 'Agrarian Conditions in the Byzantine Empire'. It is possible that one of the reasons for the absence of any general anti-feudal movement in Byzantium was the fact that the peasants preferred to live under feudal magnates, escaping thereby the payment of taxes to the State and the obligation of public military service.

hood) and the champions of the *regnum* (who were generally lawyers), in regard to the proper powers and the respective limits of the two authorities. It has been said that 'political liberty is the residuary legatee of ecclesiastical animosities'. Perhaps it would be more true to say that the growth of political liberty has largely been a result (one may even say a by-product) of struggles between the spiritual and the temporal power. The clergy, championing the claims of the spirit, and along with them (sometimes incidentally, but sometimes—it would almost seem—primarily) the rights of their own order, have sought to set limits to the claims and rights of the realm of temporal affairs and its appointed authorities; and so far as they have succeeded in setting bounds to Caesar, they have benefited the general community and the people at large as well as the cause of the spirit and the liberty of their own order. . . . The Roman Church, for example, like the Church of Calvin, has been at once the enemy and the friend of liberty: the enemy, when it has challenged the individual's freedom of thought—the friend, when it has challenged the arbitrary will of any political Leviathan, whether individual or corporate.

But this is true of Western rather than of Eastern Europe. The division between the spiritual and the temporal was conceived by the Eastern Church, and by the general community of the East Roman Empire, in a way which differed from that in which it was conceived by the West.[1] Some scholars have invented the short-hand term 'Caesaropapism' to express the difference, and to denote the peculiar power of Byzantine emperors. It is true that the emperors were 'Caesars', or rather *autocratores* (the term 'Caesar' was used in a peculiar sense in Constantinople); but it is *not* true that they were 'popes'. What *is* true is that they had inherited a peculiar position from the first Christian emperor Constantine—a position which had no parallel in the West. Constantine had been welcomed by the Christian community of the Eastern Mediterranean as the head and forefront of its life, who could convoke and guide the Councils which defined its faith.[2]

[1] See below, pp. 106–9, on the theory of the canonist Theodore Balsamon and its difference from Western theory.

[2] The position and rights of the early Christian emperors are clearly stated by the patriarch Antonius at the end of the fourteenth century; see below, p. 194.

He did not stand over against the *ecclesia*, as the later emperors of the West stood over against the *sacerdotium* (in distinction from it if also as partners with it): he was *in* and *of* the *ecclesia*, and he lay at its very heart. His successors were of the same order; and the canonists of the Eastern Church could accordingly lay it down that the emperors were concerned both with the things of the soul and with the things of the body. But this did not mean a system of Erastianism. It did not mean that the lay power, *as such*, was supreme in and over the Church. It meant that the emperor, as an *integral part* of the Church, had rights and duties in the Church. The rights are indeed notable. The emperor, for instance, appointed the patriarchs (see below, p. 96); and he could—and on occasion did—remove the man whom he had appointed. But the duties are equally notable. The emperor is bound and limited by the Church at the head of which he stands. He is bound by the holy Scriptures: he is bound by the rules and canons of the Seven Oecumenical Councils (see below, p. 90). Because he is *in* the Church, and *of* the Church, he is limited by its life and by the movement of its spirit. He has no infallibility. The Church may speak to him and admonish him, in the name of the tradition of its past and in the strength of the indwelling spirit of its present. And the Church did so, again and again, on a variety of occasions and through a variety of channels.

There were two main occasions on which the Eastern Church was brought into conflict with the emperor and showed the temper of spiritual independence that always lay at its core. The first was in the eighth and ninth centuries, when the issue of the use of images produced the iconoclastic controversy, and the emperors who had challenged their use were eventually forced, or persuaded, to yield to the staunch conviction of the clergy and the monks, backed by the general support of the congregations of the laity. Little survives of the literature of the Iconoclastic party; but the writings of their opponents survive, and attest the vigour with which they defended the use of images and the cause of spiritual liberty in opposition to the iconoclast emperors. St. John of Damascus bore notable testimony in the eighth century (see below, pp. 86–87); and early in the ninth century Theodore,

abbot of the monastery of Studion, vigorously assailed the interference of the emperor in affairs of the Church and zealously defended the cause of ecclesiastical independence (see below, p. 88). The second occasion of conflict between the Church and the emperor arose in the later middle ages, from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century, and turned on the issue of the relations between the Greek and the Latin Church. For political reasons, and to secure the support of the West for their tottering Empire, the emperors were willing to consent to the union of the two Churches and to accept the authority of Rome: the majority of the clergy[1] and their congregations tenaciously refused to agree; and whatever arrangement the emperors might make, and even induce their patriarchs to accept, proved ultimately vain and idle. These were the great and main occasions of the assertion of the final power of the Church in matters spiritual; but there were also lesser and yet vital occasions on which the Church asserted its authority. It did so in matters of the emperor's personal conduct and personal relations, taking its stand for the sanctity of marriage and the over-riding power of its canons even in the face of Caesar himself. No Henry VIII was possible in Byzantium; and more than one emperor found his passions bridled by a patriarch. The patriarch Polyeuktes checked and humbled John Tzimisces in 969, when he sought to marry the widow of his murdered predecessor who had been the accomplice of his *coup d'état*; and before him the patriarch Nicolas Mysticus had vehemently opposed a fourth marriage of Leo VI (886–912), on the ground that it was contrary to canon law.[2]

Such were the occasions which moved the Eastern Church to show its independence even of the emperor himself. The channels through which it acted, and asserted its independence, were mainly the patriarch and the monastic clergy; but behind both of these there stood in reserve the temper and spirit of the laity, profoundly

[1] A small section of the clergy was genuinely in favour of the union of the two Churches, and it included men such as Demetrius Cydones (the translator of St. Thomas) in the fourteenth century, and Bessarion in the fifteenth.

[2] It is true that a priest was found to celebrate the marriage, and that Nicolas was deposed and exiled. But the result was an obstinate resistance of the Church, which ended in the restoration of Nicolas to the office of patriarch. On Nicolas Mysticus, a pupil of Photius, see below, pp. 116–17.

interested in ecclesiastical matters (much more than in political), and prepared to support a popular patriarch or to follow the lead of the monastic clergy who held a high place in its affections. The Eastern Church, as we shall have occasion to notice later, had an essentially democratic basis; and the opinion of its congregations counted far more than did that of the general body of the laity in the more clerical West.

Not a few of the patriarchs of Constantinople deserve to be counted by the side of the great popes of Rome, with whom they were prepared to cross swords even more readily than they did with their own emperors. From the end of the eighth century to the later half of the eleventh there is a long succession of notable patriarchs who were scholars, or lawyers, or statesmen, as well as patriarchs—men such as Ignatius, the zealous defender of images, and his rival the scholar Photius, who between them held the patriarchal chair from 847 to 886; men such as Nicolas Mysticus and Polyeuktes, both of the tenth century, and both stalwart defenders of the canon law of marriage against the emperors of their day; men such as Michael Cerularius (the most independent and even turbulent of the patriarchs[1]), Constantine Lichudes, and John Xiphilinus (a lawyer and sometime head of the law-school at Constantinople), who held the office of patriarch in succession from 1043 to 1075, and who were all celebrated in orations by the famous scholar Psellus. Some of the patriarchs were members of the royal family; some were laymen who had won their spurs in administration, and had been elected patriarchs (as laymen could be in the Greek Church[2]) for their ability and zeal. They all counted in their day; and their quality gave them standing and a position of independence.

The monastic clergy[3] produced no figures of such stature and

[1] See J. B. Bury, *Selected Essays*, pp. 210–14. Bury speaks of him as having attempted to do for the patriarchate what his younger contemporary Hildebrand did for the pontificate in the West. He sought to make the patriarchate more independent of the palace: he wore red boots like those of the emperor: he is even said to have told the emperor, Isaac Angelus, 'It was I who gave you the Empire; I can also take it from you.' He was also concerned in a struggle with the papacy which is a landmark in the history of the schism between East and West.

[2] See below, p. 93.

[3] 'Monastic clergy' is here used in the sense of the clergy who had *stabilitas loci* and lived in monasteries. But all the higher clergy in Byzantium were 'regulars'

importance: there was no St. Bernard, and no St. Dominic, in the Eastern Church. But the monasteries and hermitages of the East were strongholds and rocks of Orthodoxy: they were peculiarly venerated, and often richly endowed with relics and offerings, by the laity; and they counted as a great and independent factor when any grave question divided the Church or pitted the clergy against the emperor. They played a notable part in the iconoclastic struggle; and if any of the monks then approached the eminence of St. Bernard, it was Theodore the abbot of the monastery of Studion, who steadily challenged the policy of the emperors of his day. At a later date, in the fourteenth century, the monastic clergy, under the leadership of Palamas, were the champions of the cause of Hesychasm—votaries, that is to say, of contemplative peace (*hesychia*) and the quest of the 'inner light'—and though the cause of Hesychasm led to no disputes with the imperial power (on the contrary one of the emperors, John VI Cantacuzene, espoused the cause in his writings after his abdication), it led to controversy in the Church (between monastic zeal and ecclesiastical conservatism), and attested the vigour and independence of thought of the monastic clergy. There was one issue, however, on which the monastic clergy were permanently divided from the imperial government, and which led to a long struggle between the two. This was the issue of monastic endowments, which was already acute in the tenth century and the days of Nicephorus Phocas (see below, p. 117). The piety of the laity—sometimes a calculated piety which sought to escape the demands of the exchequer by some sort of bargain with monastic clergy—endowed the monasteries with estates and properties as well as with relics and offerings; and the emperors felt that their finances suffered, and their army was starved of men and supplies, as the result of land passing into mortmain. The struggle between the monasteries and the imperial government led to no development of theory;[1] but it was a check, none the less, even if it was a check based on economic rather than on spiritual motives, upon

who had taken monastic vows, although they lived in the world; and only the village priests were 'seculars'.

[1] Unless the pamphlet called *Philopatris* of the reign of Nicephorus Phocas can be said to imply a theory (see below, p. 119).

the imperial power, and it is one among other reasons (even if it is a reason of a lower order) for rejecting the view that the Eastern Church was subject to a system of 'Caesaropapism'.

§ 4. But if on these occasions, and through these channels, the Church in the East Roman Empire could show its strength and maintain its ultimate spiritual independence, the fact remains that, on the whole and in the main, the Church was closely knit with the State, and intimately integrated in its life. Emperor and patriarch might on occasion disagree; but the general scheme was that of an amicable dyarchy. If patriarchs were scholars and writers, so too were some of the emperors; and most of them were patrons of learning. If the patriarch was the bishop of the faithful, the emperor, from the days of Constantine onward, was 'bishop of those without', and charged with the care and cure of pagans and heretics. Whereas in the West, after the days of Charlemagne, emperor and pope were separated (except for the emperor's rare 'Rome-journeys') by some hundreds of miles of distance, the patriarch and the Eastern emperor lived in the same royal city (*polis basilissa*), and they were joint members of its society and partners in its common intellectual life. That may seem only a physical fact, but it was a physical fact of the first importance. And it was really something more—something much more. The common place meant a common mind; it meant a common way of life, or rather a common way of looking at life; it meant, in a word (a word which is much on men's lips and pens in this twentieth century) a common 'ideology'.

That ideology was essentially a matter of metaphysics, or, more exactly, of what may be called metaphysical theology. Profoundly interested in problems of being, in virtue of the Greek genius which they inherited, and possessing a language of fine and subtle shades which could manipulate and distinguish the most delicate abstractions (what could not be done with terms such as *ousia* and *hypostasis* and *physis*?), the men of the Byzantine Empire thought and felt and had their being in the spiritual problems of the relation of the three Persons of the Trinity and the nature of the incarnation of the Son. A legal document such as the *Epanagōgē*, in defining the aim and function of the emperor, will set out and

recite—naturally and spontaneously, in such a climate and atmosphere—the views which he must cherish on these transcendent problems (see below, p. 90). This is the thing that matters: this is the value of values; and in comparison with it matters social and political, and the general problems of practical life, though they are not forgotten, recede into the background and bring up the rear.[1]

Under these conditions, and in this climate of thought, theology naturally became the queen regnant of all knowledge, and the literature of Byzantium became in the main a clerical literature, devoted to problems of theology and Biblical exegesis. There was indeed some study of law: there were two periods of legal codification, first under the Isaurian dynasty in the eighth century and then under the Macedonian in the ninth, when the Latin Code of Justinian was revised and dressed in a new Greek form: there was for a time, in the eleventh century, a law-school in Constantinople. But Byzantium produced no lawyers of the stature of the glossators and post-glossators of the West: the jurisprudence of the East Roman Empire ran in a shallow stream; and lawyers contributed little to the development of any theory of social and political life. The Church and the clergy were dominant in the field of thought and literature. There are indeed a number of lay writers to be chronicled in the history of Byzantine literature.[2] Sometimes an emperor would take to his pen; Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus wrote on the administration and the ceremonies of the Empire; Basil I is credited with two manuals or testaments supposed to have been addressed by him to his son; and Manuel II addressed to his son, early in the fifteenth century, a set of precepts for the education of a prince (see below, pp. 62–63). Sometimes, too, soldiers and ministers might also be authors, whether—like Kekaumenos and Niculitzas in the eleventh century—they set down the simple

[1] The order of duties of the emperor stated in § 4 of Titulus II of the *Epanagōgē* is typical. The duties are to enforce and maintain (1) all that is set out in the divine Scriptures, (2) the doctrines laid down by the seven holy Councils, and (3) the received 'Romaic' laws.

[2] This is one of the notable features of Byzantine life and culture. In contrast with the West, which had few lay writers, Byzantium produced an educated laity which was able and eager to write on theology as well as on history and literature.

lessons of their experience in a colloquial style, or—like Theodore Metochites in the early fourteenth century—they wrote in the loftiest 'Attic' on lofty themes of history and literature and politics. But on the whole the clergy held the field, and it was their writings which filled the shelves of monastic and other libraries.

The clergy were learned and scholarly, according to their lights. Some of their theological writings were used in the West: the treatise of St. John of Damascus—written in the eighth century, entitled 'The Fountain of Knowledge', and setting forth the essentials of the orthodox faith—was translated into Latin in the twelfth century, and was used both in the *Sentences* of Peter the Lombard and the *Summa* of St. Thomas Aquinas.[1] The study of philosophy was also steadily pursued, along with and by the side of the study of theology: commentaries on Aristotle abounded, and affected the scholarship of the West as well as that of the East; Plato was less well known before the eleventh century and the Platonic revival fostered by Psellus (see below, p. 130), but from that time onwards the study of Platonic philosophy found a home in Constantinople, and was gradually transmitted from the East to Italy and the West. Yet though both theology and philosophy were cultivated in the East Roman Empire, and though a large crop of writings was produced by the cultivation, there was little that was fresh or original in the results produced. The Byzantine clergy were commentators rather than thinkers; and busy as they were, they left few if any permanent memorials of all their industry.

We have already seen that the weight of the inheritance of the past lay heavy on their minds, and we have also noticed some of the difficulties of language by which they were hampered and thwarted. But there were also some general defects in the cultural life of Byzantium which explain the absence of original thought in the product of its studies. For one thing the monasteries of the Greek Church never made a contribution to the development of

[1] On the other side, and in the reverse direction, the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas were translated, or summarized, in Greek, for example, by Georgius Scholarius, who was patriarch of Constantinople, under the name of Gennadius, after the fall of the city in 1453. There was more give and take between the East and the West through the centuries than has been generally recognized; and there was some translation on both sides, the Greek as well as the Latin.

intellectual life such as was made by the monks, and later by the friars, of the Roman Church. In the West Benedictinism was wedded to learning from the sixth century onwards, and its later off-shoots continued the old and fine tradition which had begun with St. Benedict. In the West, again, the new orders of friars, both the Dominican and the Franciscan, had turned to study and learning from their first beginnings in the thirteenth century: in a common zeal, and sometimes in rivalry with one another, they had addressed themselves not only to the study of theology and high philosophy, but also to the practical problems of the nature and basis of the State and the proper order of society; the Dominican St. Thomas Aquinas had written on the regimen of princes, the rights of the people, and the value of a mixed system of government; and the Franciscan William of Occam had argued for the independence of royal authority and the rights of the civil power in opposition to the Papacy of his day. The monastic clergy of the Greek Church were a powerful body; but they had not the organization of different orders which sustained and encouraged thought in the West, and though on occasion, as we have seen, they could challenge and resist the authority of the State, they were mainly occupied with the problems and issues of their own mode of life, and particularly with the doctrine of contemplation and the nature of the inner light to be attained by its practice. The philosophy of the 'hesychasts' did not trend towards social and political issues; and it is perhaps significant that the one thinker who seriously addressed himself to such issues, Georgius Gemistus Plethon (1355–*circa* 1450), was a critic of the monks (the 'philosophers' or 'sophists', as he called them), and an opponent of monastic endowments (see below, p. 202).

There was another defect in the cultural life of Byzantium which was even more serious than the absence of organized religious orders, largely devoted to study and learning, such as were to be found in the West. This was the absence of a general system of organized universities, each with a mixed body of students drawn from different nations, and each with a number of teachers engaged both in teaching their students and in disputing with one another. In the West, from the twelfth century onwards, there

were such universities in England, France, Italy, and Germany: they mixed nation with nation, clergy with laity, and the friars with secular priests: and the mixture of these different elements—different nationalities and languages, different classes and professions—was a constant stimulus to thought and discussion. The East was not so fortunate. As it stood in the middle of the Middle Ages, it was inferior in its opportunities not only to the contemporary West, but also to its own rich past. There had been a time, in the Hellenistic age of the successors of Alexander, and in the Graeco-Roman age which followed upon it, when the Eastern Mediterranean had the stimulus of a number of intellectual centres —Athens, Pergamum, Rhodes, and Alexandria. Even later, in the age of Justinian, there were centres of intellectual life not only at Constantinople, but also at Antioch and Alexandria, at Gaza in Palestine (celebrated as 'the friend of the Muses' and the home of Greek philosophic thought) and at Beyrout in Syria (famous for its law-school and hymned by the poet Nonnus in one of the books of his *Dionysiaca*). But the Mahommedan conquests of the seventh century had swept over Syria and Egypt, abolished (or absorbed in the sphere of Arabic learning) the Syrian and Egyptian centres of Greek intellectual life, and confined the opportunities of Byzantine students and scholars to the one centre of Constantinople. Nor was there, even in Constantinople, any continuous system of a regular university pursuing a course of general study. Attempts were made, it is true, at different times and in different centuries, to establish a university: there was one in the days of Photius, under the patronage of the Caesar Bardas (*circa* A.D. 850), and another in the days of Psellus, under the patronage of Constantine IX (*circa* 1050); but neither of the attempts resulted in any large or influential foundation.

Not that Constantinople ever ceased to be concerned and interested in education and culture: on the contrary *paideia*, as we shall have reason to notice later, was always one of its watchwords, and its cause was vigorously advocated by writers such as Thomas Magister (see below, p. 161). But the pursuit of the treasures of *paideia* was mainly a matter of the patriarchal and other clerical schools, and of the patronage of emperors and the

imperial family; and imperial patronage resulted mainly in imperial compilations such as those of Constantine Porphyrogenitus or eulogistic histories such as the *Alexiad* of the princess Anna Comnena. We may almost say that *paideia* was a fashion rather than a passion. But at any rate it was a vogue; and that, so far as it goes, must be set down on the credit side of the last phases of Byzantine history. The Comneni, the Lascarids of Nicaea in the thirteenth century, the Palaeologi of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (Andronicus II, John VI Cantacuzene, and Manuel II), were all patrons of scholars or themselves devoted to scholarship. On the other hand it may be conjectured that the very fact of imperial patronage and imperial addiction to scholarship had an adverse effect on the free and general development of thought. What could a scholar do, when his sovereign too was a scholar and (like Manuel II) a writer of works on the duty of princes, but write a panegyric addressed to the emperor or compose some sort of bright 'mirror for princes' in the traditional style that went back to the orations of Isocrates?

There is still another respect in which the Byzantines were denied an opportunity which good fortune presented to the West. They were confined, on the whole, to a single language and to the literature of that language; and this led to a certain in-breeding, which tended, in turn, to produce a certain infertility. The writers of the West had generally at least two languages—their own particular vernacular and the common or international Latin which was the possession of all scholars. It was a stimulus to them to have the command of both languages: it was a further stimulus that they could use their Latin flexibly, not cramping themselves by imitation of the periods and the style of the ancient masters (as the Byzantines too often did), but adapting the Latin they used to the needs of logical argument, as St. Thomas Aquinas notably did, or to the demands of fresh emotions, as did the Archipoeta and other writers of Latin lyrics in the Middle Ages. Moreover, the West, from the twelfth century onwards, and particularly in the course of the thirteenth, acquired a stock of Latin translations from the Greek which fed its thought—translations for instance of the writings of St. John of Damascus, and, above all, translations of

the writings of Aristotle, either made directly from the original Greek or from the Arabic versions or paraphrases of the Greek current among Moslem scholars in Spain. The scholars of the East were, in comparison, unilingual or monoglot (Latin had ceased to be used in Constantinople after the end of the seventh century): confined to the Greek inheritance, they used only the language of Greece; and they suffered from the confinement.

There was indeed some contact with Persia and with the Arabs of Bagdad, but it was mainly in the field of mathematics and natural science;[1] and it was an exception when in the seventh or eighth century the story of the life of Buddha was borrowed from India and turned into Greek in a Christian version under the title of *Barlaam and Josaphat*, or when at a later date an Indian series of animal fables, after travelling through Persian and Arabic redactions, was translated into Greek for Alexius Comnenus with the title of *Stephanites and Ichnelates* (see below, pp. 81 ff and 141 ff). More important, and of far greater influence, was the contact of Byzantium with the Slavs and the work of the two Greek scholars of Salonica, Cyril and Methodius, who constructed a Slavonic liturgy, and invented an alphabet for the expression of Slavonic sounds, in the course of a mission among the Slavs which took them as far north as Moravia (*circa* 860). But the contact of Byzantium with the Slavs was in its nature a matter of giving rather than of taking, and much as the Slavs of the Balkans and Russia owed to Byzantine missions (and also to Byzantine law), there was little they could give in return—at any rate in the field of thought.

From the Latin West there was far more to be drawn; and Latin began to return to Byzantium, from the thirteenth century onwards (and even already in the twelfth), as the West began to move to the East both by the way of the Crusades and in the

[1] Leo the Mathematician was invited by the Caliph to Bagdad in the middle of the ninth century, but the emperor kept him in Constantinople. In the fourteenth century a Byzantine scholar went to Persia to study astronomy and mathematics, and on his return translated into Greek Persian treatises on these subjects. But according to Krumbacher (*Geschichte der Byzantinischen Litteratur*, p. 623) the Byzantines were only recovering by way of Persia the discoveries of ancient Greek astronomers and mathematicians which had been adopted and preserved by Persian scholars.

course of trade, and as Western scholarship produced a body of organized thought which commanded general respect and study. Indeed there was now a two-way traffic between the West and the East: on the one hand the scholars of the West began to make Latin translations direct from the ancient Greek (as William of Moerbeke translated the *Politics* and the *Rhetoric* of Aristotle); and on the other hand the scholars of the East began to translate the Latin classics into Greek. Maximus Planudes (1260–1310) deserves to be remembered not only for the *Anthology* of Greek epigrams which he compiled (a successor to the *Stephanos* of Meleager of Gadara of 60 B.C. and the *Anthologia Palatina* of Cephalas in the early tenth century A.D.), but also for his many translations from the classics of Latin literature. It has been said that he was the first Byzantine who studied Latin literature; and his translations of the *Somnium Scipionis* of Cicero (with the commentary of Macrobius), of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and *Heroides*, and of the *De Consolatione Philosophiae* of Boethius, survive in many manuscripts and were used as school-books by the Renaissance teachers of the West for the instruction of their pupils in Greek. A little later Demetrius Cydones (*circa* 1320–1400), reacting against the Byzantine view that 'the Latins belonged to the category of barbarians', and moved by admiration for the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas, translated his *Summa Theologiae* (or parts of it), with passages from his *Contra Gentiles*, as well as some of the writings of St. Augustine and St. Anselm. But this tribute to the West came too late to have any lasting effect, and the verdict must still be passed that the scholarship of Byzantium was too much limited, and too much inbred, to produce any notable contribution to European thought. It was a bookish scholarship, and yet without a large enough range of books: serious as it was, and ardently as it was cultivated, it was the scholarship of too limited and sophisticated a circle. It did not touch life, or pierce to the quick. Gemistus Plethon is an exception. But he stood outside the circle of orthodoxy; and he lived and taught far away from Constantinople in the depths of the Peloponnese.

§ 5. All in all, the record of Byzantium in the field of social and political theory is a record of limited achievement. In the

general field of history Byzantine writers left many notable monuments; and the historian of Byzantine literature has justly said that historiography was the form of literature which excelled all others in importance and range.[1] But in the field of political theory, which is naturally an extension and development of history, and which largely consists in the speculations and conclusions that issue from the study of history, the Byzantines were not adepts. They could study and record the history of the past: they had less interest in the task of disengaging the ideas immanent in its course, and they were less concerned with explaining the logic of its development. They took for granted, as a sure and stable part of the divine system of the Universe, a scheme of social and political order under which the imperial head of a Christian community exercised a 'God-founded power' in the 'God-guarded royal city' on the Golden Horn; and they were content, in the main, simply to depict and celebrate the splendour of the head and forefront of the order. The political theory of Byzantium thus begins in what may be called a *Fürstenspiegel*, or 'mirror of princes', such as is to be found in 'the Exposition of Heads of Advice and Counsel' addressed by Agapetus, a deacon of the Church of St. Sophia, to Justinian I (see below, p. 54); and as it began in this genre, so it continued in it for nearly a thousand years. Sometimes an emperor himself would write a manual of advice to his son: Basil I, as we have seen, is said to have addressed two such manuals to his son Leo the Wise; and Manuel II (1391–1425), in the last days of the Empire, similarly bequeathed to his son John VIII a manual or testament under the style of 'Counsels on the education of a prince'. More often a scholar—a monk or a bishop or an archbishop—wrote a treatise 'on kingship' or some form of eulogy of an emperor mixed with ethico-political advice; and works of this order became increasingly frequent as the Empire became progressively weaker. The archbishop Theophylact of Bulgaria, towards the end of the twelfth century, wrote an *Institutio Regia* for his pupil Constantine, the son of Michael VII (1071–8): the monk and scholar Nicephorus Blemmydes, in the thirteenth century, wrote a work entitled *Andrias Basilikos* ('the Statue of a

[1] Krumbacher, *Geschichte der Byzantinischen Litteratur*, p. 10.

King') for his pupil Theodore Lascaris II, an emperor who ruled in Nicaea during the Latin occupation of Constantinople: Thomas Magister, a monk who lived for some time in Thessalonica, wrote treatises 'on kingship' and 'on polity' (the first on the duties of an emperor, and the second on those of his subjects), in the reign of Andronicus II (1282–1328); and Georgius Gemistus Plethon, the scholar and philosopher of Mistra, wrote two addresses of advice 'on the State of the Peloponnese'—one to Manuel II and one to his son Theodore—about the year 1415.

Such was the main current of the stream of Byzantine political theory. It consisted of speculations, mainly by the clergy (and occasionally by the emperors themselves), on the nature of the 'God-founded power' of the emperor, on the methods of education for the exercise of that power, and on the uses to which the power should be put. But there were also other currents. Four of these may be particularly mentioned.

(*a*) Sometimes a layman who had served in the army or the administration would attempt a work in the nature of a 'layman's reflections' on the experiences of his life. Notable examples of this type are the *Strategicon* (or officers' manual) of the soldier and administrator Kekaumenos, and the brief essay of his kinsman Niculitzas (also a soldier) entitled 'an exhortation to a *basileus*', both written in the latter half of the twelfth century. Another example, of a very different character, is furnished by the voluminous essays, or *Miscellanea*, of Theodore Metochites, who held the office of Grand Logothete under Andronicus II at the end of the thirteenth century, and wrote on a large variety of topics ranging from history and politics to philosophy and general literature. His reflections on the course and significance of the ancient history of Greece show some power of understanding the general movement of affairs; and his observations on the merits and defects of different types of constitution, if they are inferior to those of Polybius, and indeed are little more than tags and classical commonplaces, are nevertheless attempts at some sort of political theory.

(*b*) A second current in the stream of Byzantine political speculation is the scholarly or scholastic. But this was a small and thin current—largely, perhaps, because Byzantium never enjoyed

the benefits of a continuous and organized system of university life, with all its attendant traditions and methods of disputation. There are, however, two examples of what may be called 'scholastic' political theory. One is a curious dialogue 'on political science' (see below, p. 63), which may belong to the sixth century, and which seems to mix a leaven of Platonism with some knowledge of the writings of Cicero in an obscure argument apparently intended to prove (somewhat in the manner of Eusebius) that true kingship is an *imitatio Dei*. The other example is the scholia, or passages of comment, on the *Politics* of Aristotle, based on the work of Michael of Ephesus at the end of the eleventh century, when he was lecturing on the writings of Aristotle in the school of philosophy which had recently been founded in Constantinople (see below, p. 136). The commentary anticipates St. Thomas Aquinas, but it is far from showing his range and depth.

(*c*) A third current, which is greater and more important than the scholastic, is what may be called the philosophic. The representatives of this current are the three main thinkers in the history of Byzantine philosophy—Photius in the ninth century, Psellus in the eleventh, and Plethon in the fifteenth. None of them left any notable work specifically concerned with politics; but all of them thought and wrote about matters of political interest in the course of their general studies and general activity. Photius may have been responsible for the definition of the position and powers of the emperor and the patriarch which appears in the beginning of the legal document called the *Epanagōgē*: he may also, it has been suggested, have been the composer of the two manuals addressed by Basil I to his son: he was certainly the author of a long pastoral letter to a Bulgarian prince on the theme, 'What is the duty of a prince?'; and he gathered round him a circle of students which studied and discussed some hundreds of the works of Greek authors, ancient as well as modern, and political as well as literary. Psellus was a Platonist—if also an opportunist: he gave the philosophy of Plato a vogue which challenged the Aristotelianism dominant in Constantinople; but his Platonism was more neo-Platonic than genuinely Platonic. He was a rhetorician as well as a philosopher, and though he might write occasionally about

politics (as he certainly dabbled deeply in actual politics) he was rather a master of phrases, mixed with occasional flashes of insight, than a master of true wisdom. Plethon was a genuine, if erratic, philosopher. His two addresses 'on the State of the Peloponnese' show a sincere interest in the actual problems of contemporary politics which is unique in the history of Byzantine thought. A Plato *redivivus*, he sought to apply the theory of Plato's *Republic* to the healing and settling of Southern Greece; and he transcends both Photius and Psellus in the genuine ardour of his convictions. Like Psellus, he eventually became a Platonist of the neo-Platonic school; but he went even beyond neo-Platonism, and plunged into the esoteric mysteries of the 'oracles of Zoroaster'. Absorbed in those mysteries, he sought in his old age to carry the *Laws* of Plato (itself the product of Plato's old age) to a new and dizzy height; and in his treatise *On Laws*—which was burned by his enemy the patriarch of Constantinople, and only survives in fragments—he sought to elaborate a doctrine which, far from being concerned with the theory of law or the conception of the State, is concerned with the establishment of a new 'Hellenic theology' (such as the emperor Julian had long before attempted to establish) which should take the place of Christianity. He thus mixed a neo-Hellenic nationalism with a neo-pagan mysticism: he abandoned the whole of the Byzantine tradition, and turned thought back to an imaginary 'Zoroastrianism' which he thought to be the primal fount of religion. The end of Byzantine speculation is thus a reversion to the beginning of time.

(*d*) If the philosophers of Byzantium, remarkable as some of them were, added no great amount to the stock of political philosophy, there is more to be said for the lawyers and their colleagues the administrators. Byzantine law-books, and Byzantine studies of the methods and objects of administration, along with 'custumals' such as the *Book of the Eparch* (which describes the Byzantine system of guilds), throw no little light on the social and political ideas of the Empire. From the *Novellae* of Justinian to the *Ecloga* of Leo the Isaurian in the eighth century, and from the *Ecloga* of Leo to the *Epanagōgē* of Basil I and Leo VI in the

ninth, there are legal documents which state and define the position and rights of the emperor, the position and rights of the patriarch, and the general system of relations between the State and the Church. Nor were the Byzantine legal documents confined to the domain of secular law. The Church also developed its canons and its 'nomocanons' (which included the *nomoi* or secular laws relating to the Church as well as the Church's own canons of ecclesiastical law); and the treatises and commentaries of a canonist such as Theodore Balsamon (*circa* A.D. 1200) have light to throw on the Church's conception of the social and political system in which it lived and worked. The administrative documents and the records of custom (not only the custom of the guilds of Constantinople, but also that of the farming class and that of the class of seafarers, or, as they are generally called, the rural and the maritime 'codes') are descriptive rather than reflective; but they are sources not only of information on details, but also of light on current ideas and principles. The imperial scholar Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (913–59), who was for the Byzantine Empire what Claudius had sought to be for the Roman, left some account of general policy as well as a mass of information in his compilations *De Administrando Imperio* and *De Ceremoniis*; and the *Book of the Eparch*, which may also belong to the tenth century (a general century of encyclopaedic compilations, literary as well as administrative), gives glimpses of the paternal system of State socialism, or at any rate State control of commerce and industry, which reigned in Constantinople.

In addition to these four sources—the 'layman's reflections'; the 'scholastic' treatises; the discourses of the philosophers; and the law-books, custumals, and administrative documents—there is also a final source which can only be called miscellaneous. Sometimes a theological treatise will issue, during the course of the argument, into a political doctrine: St. John of Damascus, for instance, arguing in favour of the use of images, will pit the tradition and rights of the Church against the power of an iconoclastic emperor, and proclaim that there are limits to the things that are Caesar's. Sometimes, again, a story or a fable imported into Byzantium from the East may be made to point a political moral,

as when the life of Buddha, given a Christian form and a Greek dress, in the eighth or ninth century, under the name of *Barlaam and Josaphat*, is made to include a disquisition on kingship, or as when a series of Indian fables, translated or paraphrased by a Greek writer towards the year 1080, is made to serve the purpose of showing the proper relations between a king and his advisers. Again, and finally, we may sometimes find a satire, such as the *Philopatris* of the end of the tenth century, which turns on the issue of the rights of the emperor in dealing with monastic property, and raises a deep political issue in the form and the course of a satire after the manner of Lucian. Indeed we may even find a literary exercise of the nature of a forgery—couched in the form of a speech or address 'to a king' (*eis basilea*), composed in the manner and style of the second-century rhetorician Aelius Aristides, and included among his orations—which eulogizes and exhorts a king in the traditional Byzantine manner. But this ascription of the speech of the pseudo-Aristides *eis basilea* to a Byzantine origin is a pure conjecture, which scholars may dismiss; and the reader is accordingly referred to the appendix, to which the conjecture is relegated and in which some defence of it is attempted.

Chapter II

THE BYZANTINE BACKGROUND

§ 1. In the West, during the Middle Ages, men spoke of a triad of agencies which moved and inspired an organized community: the *Regnum*, the *Sacerdotium*, and the *Studium*. In the Eastern Empire, during the thousand years of its history, one may speak of a similar triad (similar and yet different): *Basileia*, *Ecclesia*, and *Paideia*. The terms appear identical: the substance differs in each case. The *Basileia* of the Eastern Empire, as we have already seen, was less secular than the *Regnum* of the West. The Byzantine *Basileus* was concerned with things spiritual (the things of the soul as well as those of the body): he stood at the centre, and served as the symbol, of a Christian community based on the tradition of the Apostles, the Fathers, and the Seven General Councils. The *Ecclesia* of the East, as we shall have reason to notice in the further course of the argument, had also its own peculiar character: it was less clerical, less unitary (tending rather to a system of federalism), and more broadly based in popular life and on a general and widespread passion for theological inquiry, than was the Church of the West. So, too, the *Paideia* of Byzantium differed from the *Studium* of the West: the study of letters was cherished at the Court and by the imperial family, cultivated in the administration and by officials, and pursued in the general society of Constantinople and other great cities such as Thessalonica. It was rooted and grounded in what may be called a national feeling of Hellenism: it was a pervasive social influence, and something more than a perquisite of scholars. Too often, it is true, *paideia* degenerated into *encyclopaideia*: it became an imitative and sometimes shallow polymathy which took the form of elegant extracts, lexicons, and compilations; and in the absence of any continuous system of organized university instruction, such as the West began to attain in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, it lacked the firm foundation of a permanent scholarly tradition. But alike in its merits and its defects it was peculiar and unique;

and it contributed its own particular gifts to the general inheritance of Europe—not least by the mission which it pursued, and the culture which it spread, among the Slavonic peoples of the Balkans and Russia.

§ 2. The Byzantine *Basileia*. Scholars have debated the date of the beginning of the Byzantine Empire. Some would say that, in any strict sense of the word 'Byzantine', the Empire really began in the days of the Isaurian dynasty, during the eighth century, when Leo III and his successors, after the Arab conquest of Syria and Egypt, reorganized their diminished dominions and based the defence of the empire on the military support of the Anatolian highlanders. Others have argued that the era of Byzantium began with the reign of Heraclius (610–41), and they have noted the formal assumption of the title of Basileus (hitherto only a popular name and not an official title) in the year 629, after the defeat of the Persians by Heraclius and the transference of the Persian title of 'King' westward to Constantinople. But a still earlier date has been vindicated for the foundation of the Byzantine Empire—the date 324, when Constantine I founded the 'royal city' which for over a thousand years was to be the centre and brain of the Roman Empire in the East. The argument in favour of that early date is cogent, and indeed conclusive. It is conclusive not only because the foundation of Constantinople provided the centre and brain which was to inspire the Empire in the East for over a thousand years, but also (and this is a greater reason) because the foundation of Constantinople was synchronous with the acceptance of Christianity as the basis and core of empire, and because the essence and heart of the Byzantine Empire, from first to last, was the Christian faith which invested the emperor with his 'God-founded' power and determined the nature of the community over which he ruled.

Originally the Empire was Roman, and its members for many centuries continued to call themselves *Romaioi*. In the reign of Justinian, and during the sixth century, the Roman element was still conspicuous: the emperor sought to recover the Latin West, and he codified in Latin the law on which his empire was based. But the Roman element, in process of time, became Graeco-Roman (in the reign of Leo III the law begins to be written in

Greek, and scholars now speak of *Jus Graeco-Romanum*); and eventually the Graeco-Roman amalgam turns into something Greek—something Greek pure and simple.[1] Conservatism still clung to a Roman nomenclature: the fact behind the nomenclature was Greek, and the essence at the heart of that fact was the Greek Church, the Church of Orthodoxy, the Christian Church in the form which it had assumed in the Eastern Mediterranean by the time of the Seventh General Council in A.D. 787. But conservatism is always mixed with change, and change is always impinging on conservatism, during the twelve hundred years of Byzantine history; and that is the essence and the fascination of those years. Both change and conservatism claim their tribute. But perhaps it is just to pay a first offering to conservatism, before we seek to render its due to the great force of change.

The Byzantine Empire was long regarded as monolithic in a set immobility; as an Egyptian obelisk or a Chinese pagoda of the style of the ancient and unchanging China ruled by 'the son of heaven'. There was a measure of truth in this view. Byzantium was, in some measure, a 'bobbin bound in mummy-cloth'. A rigid ceremonial, described in Byzantine treatises, wrapped and enveloped the doings and the goings of the emperor: a developed and articulated bureaucracy regulated the movements of administration: there was a general system of *mortmain* in the life of Constantinople. A measure of security, and even of liberty, was involved in this system. The *basileus* was, it is true, an *autocrator*, ruling at his own pleasure (for he too, like his counterpart in the Far East, was a 'son of heaven'): he made the law, he was the final court of judicial appeal, he controlled the administration; he was

[1] The use of the term Greek (or Hellene) in the course of Byzantine history is curious. In the law-books, down to the ninth century, a Hellene is a pagan, and is classed with Jews and heretics (see below, p. 94). Paganism disappeared finally in the reign of Basil I, as Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus notes in the *De Administrando Imperio*, c. 50; but, so far as I know, the term 'Hellene' did not come into vogue as a term of 'national' pride till the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. In the fourteenth century Nicolas Cabasilas of Thessalonica speaks of 'this community of all Hellas' (see below, p. 187): in the fifteenth century writers begin to speak of the Palaeologi as kings 'of the Hellenes' or 'of Hellas' (O. Tafrali, *Thessalonique au quatorzième siècle*, p. 157, n. 2), and Gemistus Plethon, in particular, is eloquent about Hellenes and their 'Hellenic theology', which, however, assumes in his mind the form of neo-paganism (see below, p. 216; cf. also p. 185 note).

the legislature, the judicature, and the executive all in one. There was no single *thing* that he could not do, in theory; but there were *ways* in which he could not act. That was the value and the saving grace of the ceremonial in which he was wrapped and the bureaucracy by which he was encompassed. An autocracy, if it is to be stable, must be safeguarded by automatism; and the automatism which gives it stability is also a limit upon it, and becomes a form of security for the liberty of its subjects. The organized and traditional structure of the Byzantine community was the salt and safeguard of that community. The Church and its ceremonial—and not only its ceremonial, but also its canons—was a part of this structure; and the Church conceived the emperor as bound in the cloth of its ceremonial and canons, bound to be 'the faithful and true servant (*doulos*) and son of the holy Church', bound to follow the decrees of the Seven Councils and the ecclesiastical canons—among them the canons which regulated marriage. A Byzantine emperor subject to the rule of custom was, after all, a limited autocrat.

Limited, if also sustained, by custom and conservatism, the emperor had also to face the force of change, and to make his reckoning with the new developments which new times brought. There were two developments which particularly affected his position and his power. One, which has already been noticed (see above, p. 5), was the growth of the germs of a feudal system. Byzantium, from the eighth century onwards, was the home not only of bureaucracy, but also of an aristocracy which disputed power with the bureaucracy and attempted to make and unmake emperors. The struggle and the tension run through centuries of Byzantine history: sometimes the emperor is drawn from the ranks of the landed aristocracy of Thrace or Anatolia, and represents their cause: sometimes, and perhaps more often, he seeks to defend the peasantry and to rely on a peasant infantry. Change constantly knocks at the doors of the palace: the estate of the 'baronage' offers its frequent challenge to the power of the *autocrator*. The second development and force of change came from the estate of the clergy. Justinian I may have been—or sought to be—the master of the Church: Leo the Isaurian may have sought

to carry his iconoclastic policy in the strength of imperial decrees; but the fact remains that the Church and the clergy steadily grew in importance and power during the last seven centuries of Byzantine history, and steadily changed the balance of the Byzantine community. It was an iconoclast emperor, Leo III, who extended the range and scope of the patriarchate of Constantinople by transferring to its allegiance provinces which had hitherto belonged to the West (Sicily, Calabria, and Illyria); but the growth of the Orthodox Church was due, above all else, to its own missionary work among the Slavs, from the end of the ninth century onwards. Acting on a federal principle, and ready to recognize the new churches which arose under its impulse in the Slavonic world, the Orthodox Church attained a new magnitude. The *Basileia* shrank and shrank in the range of its temporal dominion: the *Ecclesia* grew and grew; and the patriarch of Constantinople gradually became the predominant bearer and vehicle of the Byzantine cause. If the Byzantine Empire had been from the first essentially a Christian community, it assumed that character more and more in the process of time, and it became eventually more of a church than an empire. When the last Palaeologus fell in battle, and the *Basileia* at last disappeared, the *Ecclesia* remained unshaken, and the patriarch of Constantinople now bore on his shoulders the honour—and the burden—of the Byzantine inheritance. It was the Greek Church that henceforth carried the whole of the Greek tradition: it was the Greek Church that mainly inspired the revival of Greek independence in the nineteenth century: it is the Greek Church which is still the protagonist of the cause of the unity of all Greeks.

There is one aspect of the life and development of the Byzantine Empire which illustrates the force both of conservatism and change. This is the legal aspect. Here we find both a conservative retention of the law of Rome, as it had been codified by Justinian in the Latin language, and a progressive reform of the law which not only gives it a new form of expression in Greek, but also modifies and changes its spirit. Leo III was the first innovator—the radical emperor who was both an 'iconoclast' in religion and something of a Benthamite in law. During his reign there was issued

the *Ecloga* (or 'Selection'), which is described in its title as 'a selection of laws . . . from the Institutes, Digest, Code and Novels of the great Justinian . . . a revision with a view to greater humanity (*eis to philanthropōteron*)'. The 'greater humanity' shows the influence of the Church and of Christian feeling: it appears, for example, in a higher conception of marriage and in the substitution of mutilation (in some ways a dubious reform) for capital punishment; but the fact that the language of the *Ecloga* was Greek, and that the law was thus couched in the actual and spoken language of the Empire, is perhaps of no less importance than its professed purpose of introducing a new measure of humanity. The legal reform of Leo III (717–41) was nominally reformed in its turn—'purged', it was said, 'as being a subversion of the good laws which was useless for the empire' (the words are intended as a criticism of the iconoclast emperor), but really continued and extended—by the various legislative enactments and documents of the first two Macedonian emperors, Basil I and Leo VI (867–912). These include a Manual (the *Procheiron* or 'handy law') arranged in forty titles, and meant as a practical law-book which judges could use and apply in the courts: they also include an Introduction (the *Epanagōgē*), which may not have been officially published, but was none the less, with its forty titles, a work of no little importance which was afterwards translated into Slavonic and influenced thereby the development of Russia;[1] and finally they include, as their apex, the sixty books of the *Basilica*, a codification not only of secular law (both private and public) but also of the law or canons of the Church. Greek was the language used in all three: the *Basilica* formed the greatest and the fullest collection of law known to the Byzantine Empire, and became the basis of its jurisprudence. An index or register was added to it in the twelfth century (the *Where's What* or *Ti Pou Keitai*); and with all this achievement to its credit Byzantium could face the West with a record of legal progress which was unique in Europe.[2]

[1] The statement of the rights and duties of the emperor and the patriarch in Titles II and III of the *Epanagōgē* was used by Nikon, the patriarch of Moscow, in the seventeenth century (Ostrogorsky, *Geschichte des Byzantinischen Staats*, p. 169).

[2] Yet in spite of this legal progress there was little study of jurisprudence, and no serious attempt (such as was made in the West by the glossators and post-

Meanwhile the study of ecclesiastical law was steadily pursued and developed by the canonists of the Greek Church; and the commentaries and treatises of Theodore Balsamon, at the end of the twelfth century, are parallel, in their measure, to the *concordantia discordantium canonum* which the monk Gratian gave to the Western Church about the year 1140. Down to the end of the twelfth century, and until it sustained the fatal shock of the Latin conquest of Constantinople in 1204, the Byzantine Empire was as much creative, in the sphere of law, as it was also, and justly, conservative. In the sphere of administration, too, it showed a power of adaptation and change as well as a love of bureaucratic tradition. Here, again, it was far from being stereotyped or enveloped in red tape. It is the very fact of constant change, and the constant permutation of offices in functions as well as in titles, which makes it difficult if not impossible to attain a clear view of Byzantine administration. A modern historian of the Byzantine State has said with justice that 'contrary to the view, once current, of the ossification of the Byzantine State, the character of that State, and with it the organisation of the Court and the machinery of the administration, was engaged in a constant process of change'.[1] Byzantium, in a word, was never an instance or type of Chinese immobility.

But if the Byzantine Empire was not Chinese, the question may still be raised whether it was not, in spirit, Oriental rather than Western, and modelled more on an Eastern than a Western type. There was certainly a good deal of intercourse, amicable as well as hostile, between the Byzantines and their Eastern neighbours; and either influenced the other. There are Oriental notes and tendencies in Byzantine tales and romances, in Byzantine ceremonial and dress, in Byzantine art and architecture. The *Persicus apparatus* of the dress and ceremonial of the Court is indeed obvious and striking; but it is pre-Byzantine in origin. The emperor Diocletian had already gone East in the institution of a Court ceremonial of *adoratio*: the graded hierarchy of precedence, and

glossators) to attain a philosophy of law. The Byzantines digested and indexed law: they were less active in reflection and speculation.

[1] Ostrogorsky, op. cit., pp. 174–5.

the pomp and magnificence of the emperor's dress and diadem, were inherited, and not created, by Constantine I and his successors. The 'Brideshow' for the selection of an empress, at which the most beautiful and accomplished *débutantes* were collected for the emperor's inspection, was a Byzantine innovation on the past: it may be Arabic—or even Chinese—in origin: it certainly had analogies and parallels in the East. But the most striking of all the Oriental elements in Byzantine life was the position and power of eunuchs. In Byzantium, as in China and other Eastern countries, eunuchs were not only a social institution, but also a political factor. Some, such as Narses, were generals: some were statesmen or patriarchs: the chamberlains and the keepers of the wardrobe, who by virtue of their office were closely connected with the person of the emperor, were always eunuchs. There may have been reasons of State, as well as domestic reasons, for their employment: they could not found families, and they were by their nature free from the tendency to hereditary office and power which all emperors had reason to fear. Fortunately for Byzantium the eunuchs never became an organized body bidding for power and pursuing a 'sinister interest', as they did in China: the Byzantine eunuchs were spread through the whole of society, and they were merged in its general play.[1]

We may enumerate and catalogue Oriental elements in the system of the Byzantine Empire; but the Empire itself was never, in its aggregate and general life, an Oriental institution. The Empire was, of course, influenced by its Eastern neighbours, as it also influenced them; but it was in its beginnings, and it continued to be to the end, essentially Western. From first to last it was, in its nature, an amalgam of Greece and Rome, with the balance inclining progressively to Greece, but with Rome still present in the mixture. The essence of the Byzantine *Basileia* was Christianity in its Greek form of Orthodoxy; and that essence survived, as has already been noticed, even when the secular vehicle which had been its bearer and support was swept away. The legal cadre of its

[1] On the general question of the Oriental elements in the Byzantine Empire an admirable and balanced statement may be found in the essay on 'Some Aspects of Byzantine Civilisation' by N. H. Baynes (*Byzantine Studies and Other Essays*, 1955, pp. 67 ff.).

action was the law of Rome—a law which came to be expressed in Greek, and not in Latin, and was modified into closer accordance with the principles of Greek Christianity, but which never ceased to be based on the foundations laid by Rome. The language and the culture of the Empire were Greek to the end; and the ancient tradition of Greece—its poetry and its philosophy, its rhetoric and its historiography—always remained the canon of thought and taste, and was still being steadily cultivated to the very last, indeed more cultivated than ever in the final epochs of the Lascarid and the Palaeologus dynasties. We may speak of the 'East Roman' and even of the 'Eastern' Empire. But the Empire of which we are speaking belonged to the life and tradition of the West. Byzantium was giving to, and taking from, the West all through its history, and that particularly and especially from the year 1100 onwards. It gave inspiration to Western painting and architecture: it gave much to Western theology:[1] it gave ideas and methods of administration, and official styles and titles, to the States of the West: it gave to Western scholars, as early as the fourteenth century, and long before the fall of Constantinople, the inspiration of Greek literature and the germs of the Italian Renaissance. It took, too, as well as gave. If the West translated Greek into Latin, Byzantium translated Latin into Greek: it knew the works of St. Thomas Aquinas, and it translated and used those works. The roots of Byzantium were deep in the ground of European civilization, and it was with that civilization and its development that Byzantium was always connected. We can only say that Byzantium belonged to the East if we make the assumption that Greece and the Greek inheritance were Eastern. But that assumption need only be stated in order to be rejected.

§ 3. The Byzantine *Ecclesia*. Something has already been said, in the course of the previous argument, about the character of the Church in Byzantium and its relation to the Byzantine State.[2] Here it will be sufficient if we advance and seek to establish three

[1] The Latin theology of the thirteenth century, as scholars are now beginning to discover, owed a considerable debt to Greek patristic writings: e.g. St. Thomas Aquinas drew on the writings of John of Damascus (see below, p. 86).

[2] See above, pp. 7 ff.

negative propositions, each of which implies and suggests a positive implication.

The first is that the Byzantine Church was not a Church which lived and moved under a system of Caesarism or Erastianism, or acknowledged the supremacy of the civil power in matters spiritual. Though it was intimately connected with the Empire, it was not a creature of the Empire, but rather a parallel system of order, independently based on its own tradition and expressing itself independently through its councils and its patriarch. It moved of its own motion, and it moved in its own free life. The second proposition is at once an addition to the first, and a reinforcement of its weight. If the Byzantine Church did not live under a system of Erastianism, neither did it live under a system of clericalism. It was not a sacerdotal Church, enthroned in majesty above the laity: we may even say that it was a 'democratic' Church, in which the parish clergy were drawn from the people at large and lived in intimate contact with the laity of their congregations, and in which the opinion and faith of the people was generally the ultimate influence, as was shown in the course of the iconoclastic controversy and again on the issue of union between the Greek and the Latin Church. The people clung to images: the people clung to the independence of their Church from Rome; and it was the will of the people which ultimately prevailed. The third proposition is in turn connected with the second. If the Byzantine Church was not clerical, neither was it a centralized or authoritarian Church, seeking to govern all Orthodox Christians from the one centre of Constantinople and to impose upon them all the authority of the one patriarch enthroned in the Church of St. Sophia. On the contrary it was a Church which acted on the principle of federalism. Filled with a zeal of missionary activity, which carried it, from the days of Cyril and Methodius onwards, into the Balkans and up into Russia, it gave to its mission churches the gift of independence; and it has been justly said that 'the Byzantine ideal was a series of autocephalous . . . Churches, linked by inter-communion'.[1] This idea of the inter-communion of independent religious communities, on a basis of federalism, was

[1] J. C. S. Runciman, *Byzantine Civilization*, p. 128.

an ancient and indigenous tradition of the Churches of the Eastern Mediterranean. It was prior to the mission among the Slavs. The conception of the 'Pentarchy'—the five patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch, Constantinople, Jerusalem, and Rome—was an old and permanent conception in the East. It was easy, when that conception was thus established, to extend it northward and eastward to the mission churches among the Slavs.

(*a*) We may now attempt a brief justification of each of these propositions. So far as the first is concerned, it must at once be admitted that a spirit of Caesarism was natural, and indeed inevitable, in the early centuries of the Eastern Church. For one thing, the old pre-Christian tradition of the all-inclusive single society, with its head responsible alike for secular and for religious affairs and acting as both a priest and a ruler, still survived in men's minds. For another thing, the members of the Christian Church, in a natural passion of feeling for an emperor who had become a Christian, were ready to exalt his power, to celebrate his majesty, and to proclaim his power of summoning councils and of conducting their deliberations and sanctioning their decisions.[1] In this way Constantine I was invested with something of the dignity of a Caesar-pope: he was celebrated by eulogists as appointed by God to be 'bishop of those without' (that is to say of heretics and pagans); he was acknowledged, and even invited, to be God's vicegerent *in* the Church and to act as His mediator in establishing its doctrine. Justinian I, two centuries afterwards, still retains this ancient tradition, and still concerns himself anxiously with doctrine (though somewhat troubled by the divergent doctrine professed by his empress); but Justinian also recognizes, in a *Novella* (see below, p. 76), that there is a distinction between the priesthood which serves divine ends and the *Basileia* concerned with human affairs—a distinction which, however, he cannot be said to have observed in practice.[2] Leo III in the eighth century can still claim 'I am emperor and I am priest' (*Basileus eimi kai hiereus eimi*); and as has already been noticed he intro-

[1] See Barker, *From Alexander to Constantine*, pp. 356–7.

[2] Ostrogorsky, op. cit., p. 47, notes that 'in the history of the relations of Church and State the epoch of Justinian marks the zenith of imperial influence in the life of the Church'.

duced his policy of iconoclasm by means of an imperial decree. But his policy and his action called forth the protests of St. John of Damascus, which sought to set bounds to the secular power and to press the distinction between the things of God and the things of Caesar. The policy of the iconoclastic emperors failed, and with it faded the surviving vestiges of Caesaropapism. Henceforth, for the remaining centuries (which are the longer half) of Byzantine history the ideas set forth at the end of the ninth century in the *Epanagōgē* (see below, pp. 91 ff.) prevail: the patriarch stands by the side of the emperor; and though the emperor may nominate and depose a patriarch, it is equally true that a patriarch may on occasion defy and even defeat an emperor. In Byzantium as well as in the West, it has been justly said, the Church confronted the head of the State as a more or less autonomous power.[1]

But it is also true, as has also been observed with no less justice, that an inclination of the balance in favour of the Empire always tended to remain a characteristic of Byzantium. There are two reasons for this tendency. One reason, which has already been noticed (see above, p. 8), is the fact that the emperor was never conceived as a separate secular power divorced from the Church—a 'civil' power distinct and different from the spiritual: on the contrary he was regarded as in, and of, the Church, standing at its centre, a part (and indeed the heart) of its life. If the balance was in his favour, that was only because he was an officer in, and of, the Church, acting for the Church and within the Church, and not because he was the officer of a civil order outside and superior to the Church. (This is the opposite of Erastianism, which is the claim of the civil power, *as such*, to control matters spiritual.) The second reason is the general paternalism or (if the word may be used) 'grandmotherliness' of Byzantine government. The *Basileia* was, or was expected to be, a general providence (*pronoia*), supervising and regulating economics (as the *Book of the Eparch*[2] shows), and equally supervising and regulating the religion of its citizens —for example by punishing heresy or by transporting heretics into regions where they would be more harmless than they were in their own country.

[1] Ostrogorsky, op. cit., p. 18.

[2] See below, p. 97.

None the less, and though the balance thus tended to incline in favour of the emperor, the fact remains that from the ninth century onwards, and even from the eighth, the Church was a great and growing power. It grew in range, as has already been noticed, even under Leo III, who added new provinces to the patriarchate of Constantinople; and it extended its range even more, and with far greater results, under the Macedonian dynasty, as its missionary activity spread among the Slavonic peoples. It grew also in power as well as in range. Ecclesiastical conviction, backed by popular opinion, carried the day against the policy of the iconoclastic emperors; and in the succeeding centuries a number of notable patriarchs united scholarship with zeal in the defence of the law of the Church and the promotion of its influence. Their zeal showed itself in vindication of the canon law of marriage against offending emperors: their scholarship, and that of their clergy, added a new glory to the Church; and indeed it was this scholarship which, as we shall have reason to notice later, preserved for the world the classics and the general literature of ancient Greece, giving us the bulk of our manuscripts and adding to that gift the further service of a learned interpretation of the philosophy and poetry of ancient Greece.

Nor were the patriarchs and their clergy the only members of the Church to guard the cause of learning and pursue the study of letters. The monks were also active. The monastery of Studion in Constantinople was a home of scholarship as well as hymnody from the days of Theodore Studites onwards: it was a place of the copying of manuscripts: it was also a centre of ecclesiastical resistance to imperial intervention in the affairs of the Church. In the course of time, and by the fourteenth century, the monastic 'hesychasts' developed an advanced and mystical doctrine of contemplation which added new depths to theological thought (see below, pp. 184–5). But even before the days of 'hesychasm' the monks had been ecclesiastical radicals and had helped to inspire the 'zealots', or (as we might say) the 'high-churchmen', who clung stiffly to ecclesiastical principle and abhorred all compromise; and they had steadily opposed the moderates (the *politikoi*, as they were called) who were willing to practise 'economy' and

to come to terms with the secular world. In this sense the Byzantine Church was not one, but two; and it changed as the balance of its two sections changed and as the 'zealots' or high-churchmen acquired more influence. Whatever Caesarism there may have been in the early centuries of the Byzantine Church, there was little of it at the end, when the 'zealots' became the dominant party. If, as was argued above, there was change at work in the Byzantine State—change as well as conservatism, and even more than conservatism—the same is true, and even more true, of the Byzantine Church. It, too, was not a mummy: on the contrary it was a living and growing body, engaged in movement and change. It grew as the Empire shrank: it grew both in range and in power; and the last days of Byzantium present us with the spectacle of a great Church and a small State—a State confined to Constantinople and the Golden Horn, and a Church spread far and wide from Mistra in the Peloponnese to Moscow, and still counting its adherents, in countries long lost to the Empire, as far East as the Caucasus.

Yet the great Church still clung to the diminished and dwindling Empire. Patriarchs such as Michael Cerularius might challenge the *Basileus*: the Zealots might proclaim the cause of spiritual independence; but the idea of the interconnexion of *Ecclesia* and *Basileia*, and of the union of the two as joint members of a common Christian community, persisted to the end. There is a correspondence between the patriarch of Constantinople and the Grand Prince of Moscow, Vasili I, at the end of the fourteenth century (1394–7), which is as significant as it is moving. The Grand Prince had drawn a distinction between what he regarded as the vanished power of the *Basileia* and the surviving authority of the *Ecclesia*: 'we have a church', he had said, 'but no emperor'. The patriarch Antonius hastened to defend the cause of the inherent and vital connexion between Church and Empire: 'It is impossible that Christians should have a church but not an empire: the empire and the church have a great unity and community, and it is impossible to separate them from one another.' There is, he argues, one natural emperor and one only: his authority is oecumenically valid: 'and if now, by the permission of God,

the heathen have encompassed the realm of the emperor, he still receives to this day from the church the same . . . honour and prayers, and he is still anointed and appointed as *basileus* and *autocratōr* of the Romans, which is to say of all Christians'.[1] So to the end the Byzantine Church clings to its one emperor (rejecting the claims of the West), and so it clings to its age-long view that this one emperor is linked with its life in an indissoluble unity.

(*b*) The second of the propositions advanced above—that the Byzantine Church was not clerical, but rather 'democratic' or 'congregational'—stands in less need of justification. The terms 'democratic' and 'congregational' may indeed be criticized as over-drawn; but there is substance behind the terms. The general congregation of the laity always exercised a powerful influence in the life of the Byzantine Church. Patriarchs and bishops could be, and were, drawn from the ranks of the laity (see below, p. 93); and more than one distinguished patriarch came to his office from the ranks of the administration and the field of scholarship. If the members of the episcopate must be unmarried, the priests of the parishes were generally married; and these village 'popes' were thus linked with their congregations in a common social life. But the fundamental basis of the popular or congregational nature of the Byzantine Church was due to the strength of popular faith and to the deep and genuine interest of the whole community in matters and issues of religion. That interest was shown in the ready recruitment both of priests and of monks from the ranks of the people: it was shown in the generous gifts of the laity to churches and monasteries: it was shown above all in the popular movements of religious opinion which were the decisive factors in the settlement of religious issues. By virtue of the width of its recruitment the Church was a democratic institution, steadily true to the ideas and principles of the early Christians: its highest offices were open to men of humble origin; and though emperors might show favouritism to members of their own family, or to imperial

[1] The letter of Antonius is quoted in Ostrogorsky (op. cit., pp. 397–8), from the *Acta et Diplomata Medii Aevi sacra et profana*, edited by Miklosich and Müller, ii. 190–1. It is translated more fully below, p. 194.

officials, in their ecclesiastical appointments, ecclesiastical careers were generally open to talents. The generous endowments lavished on the Church, if they attested and confirmed its popularity, also brought it into conflict with the emperors, who feared, and not without reason, the depletion of their own resources (see below, p. 118); but the estates of the Church were legally subject to taxation, they were not the basis of ecclesiastical principalities such as were known in the West, and their range and distribution gave the Church in general an economic basis of popular support which secured its strength—the endowments which came from the people at large serving to support a clergy, both parochial and monastic, which equally came from the people. It is not, however, the width of its popular recruitment, or the range and spread of the endowments which it drew from the people, which are the main justification for regarding the Byzantine Church as a Church of the people. Essentially and fundamentally, it was the Church of the people for the one compelling reason that it was the great interest which lay at the heart of the people. They felt and thought, they debated and they disagreed, in terms of religion rather than in terms of politics: each of them was 'an ecclesiastical animal' (*zōon ekklēsiastikon*), as well as, and more than, 'the political animal' which Aristotle had defined the Greeks of his time as being; and if in politics the Byzantines were content to be imperialists, they found in religion the outlet for the spirit of democracy and the passion of debate.

(*c*) The third and last proposition—that the Eastern Church was not a centralized or unitary Church, as the Church of the West progressively became, but was based on a federal principle—has still less need of justification, and may almost be taken for granted. From the early days of the East Roman Empire Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem had counted as well as Constantinople; and the Byzantines, recognizing Rome as a partner, and indeed as a senior partner (though they claimed that Constantinople should rank 'next after Rome'), accepted and professed the theory of the Pentarchy—the five ecclesiastical governments of the Church. A federal theory was thus indigenous in the Eastern Mediterranean, and was already established as a tradition by the

end of the fifth century.[1] It was natural, and a matter of simple logic, that the idea underlying the theory of the Pentarchy should eventually come to be extended to the new mission churches which arose in the days of the Macedonian dynasty. If Antioch and Jerusalem and Alexandria were in a sense submerged by the Mahommedan conquest of Syria and Egypt in the seventh century, a new world arose in the north to redress the balance. From the end of the ninth century onwards, beginning in the days of Photius with the work of the Slavonic Apostles Cyril and Methodius (*circa* 850–80), Greek Christianity spread to the Serbs, the Bulgars, the Russians, and even as far as Lithuania; and the federal principle spread with it. The new Churches had their own liturgy in their own language (that was the work begun by Cyril and Methodius): some of them claimed and acquired for a time patriarchates of their own: at the least they had their own primates or archbishops, and mainly governed their own affairs. Occasionally the patriarch of Constantinople might seek to assert a primacy: the patriarch Callistus in 1352 excommunicated the Serbian patriarchate, which had constituted itself of its own motion, and compelled the Bulgarian patriarchate to give precedence to his name and style in the services of the Bulgarian Church.[2] The status and powers of the new Slavonic Churches naturally differed from the status and powers enjoyed by the Churches of Antioch, Jerusalem, and Alexandria under the theory of the Pentarchy; but there was likeness as well as difference, and a system of free or 'autocephalous' Churches established itself at last, though it was not till the nineteenth century and the coming of nationalism that independent *national* Churches attained a final autonomy.

§ 4. The Byzantine *Paideia*. The study of books and the practice of literary arts were cultivated from first to last in the Byzantine Empire; indeed they were never more sedulously cultivated than they were in its last stages, when the Byzantines seemed to take refuge from the threat of political extinction in an increased

[1] Chronologically, Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch were the oldest patriarchates. Constantinople came next, in time, and Jerusalem was finally declared a patriarchate by the Council of Chalcedon in 451. On the theory of the Pentarchy see the passage quoted from Theodore of Studion (below, p. 88).

[2] Ostrogorsky, op. cit., p. 387.

passion for culture. (Isocrates, many centuries before, had said that the Hellas of his day had now become a culture, or *paideia*; the same might have been said of the Byzantine Empire by a writer of the age of the Palaeologi.) Originally, and down to the Mahommedan conquests of the seventh century, the culture of the Eastern Mediterranean had lived and flourished in a number of centres. There was not only Constantinople; there was also Alexandria, with its centuries of scholarship and thought from the days of Alexander onwards; there was Antioch; there was Gaza in Palestine; and there was Beyrout. The Mahommedan conquests submerged Alexandria and the Syrian centres: Constantinople became for centuries the one focus of culture; it might almost be said, in the words of a modern Greek proverb, 'All the world is 10—and the City is 15.'[1] From the beginning of the eighth century to the end of the twelfth '*the* city'—the one city whose unique character is still expressed in the name Istanbul[2]—was the peculiar home of intellectual life for the East, to a degree and in a measure which had no parallel in the West. But the monopoly of Constantinople ceased with the fall of the city and the Latin conquest of 1204. A new centre arose at Nicaea in the thirteenth century; and if after the recovery of Constantinople in 1261 Constantinople took the place of Nicaea, and recovered much of its power, it was never again the only centre. Thessalonica, which had already been adorned by the classical scholarship of its archbishop Eustathius at the end of the twelfth century, was a centre of culture in the fourteenth: Mistra in the Peloponnese was a centre in the days of Gemistus Plethon, during the first half of the fifteenth; and distant Trebizond, under its separate empire, became a home of mathematical and scientific study, in contact with Persia, during the fourteenth century.

On the whole, however, and during their great middle period (850–1200), Byzantine culture and literature were domiciled in a single centre. And as they had, on the whole, a single centre for their residence, so they showed, in the main, a single and uninterrupted continuity in the long course of their history. We

[1] Krumbacher, op. cit., p. 3.
[2] Istanbul is the Greek *eis tēn polin*—to *the* city.

speak of 'Renaissances' in the West—the Carolingian Renaissance, the classical Renaissance of the twelfth century, the scholastic and philosophic Renaissance of the thirteenth, the Italian Renaissance of the fifteenth. There are no similar Renaissances in the East. We may speak, in loose and vague language, of a Renaissance in the age of Photius (*circa* 850), of another in the age of Psellus (*circa* 1050), and of another in the reign of Andronicus II and the days of his grand logothete Theodore Metochites (see below, pp. 161–2). But the essential fact about the Byzantine *paideia* is the fact of continuity—the fact of an undeviating and uninterrupted cult of the Greek inheritance. Byzantine writers—whether they belonged to the clergy or to the laity, whether they were monks and bishops or officials in the imperial service and members of the imperial household—lived constantly in the tradition of antiquity. They recall in their writings passages of ancient Greek history: they remember Plato and Aristotle: they live in, and on, the past. This was at once a reason for their defects and a source of their merits. It was a reason for their defects in so far as it discouraged original thought and encouraged the conning *ad infinitum* of ancient texts. But this habit of living in the past was also a source of gain. After all, the past, and the tradition of the past, which the Byzantines conned so unendingly, was *their own* past. It had, as it were, a national ground: the tradition they studied was a tradition expressed in their own language, and homogeneous with their own life; it was knit to them, and they to it, by a natural piety.

Here we come upon another difference between the then Latin West and the Greek East. The writers and scholars of the Latin West expressed in a Latin which was not their native language ideas which they had largely drawn (and that through translation rather than through study of the original) from a literature which, for them, was not a native literature—the literature of ancient Greece. Byzantine scholars were on their own ground: they went straight to their own sources, and drew on their own original and native tradition.[1] There was another advantage which some of

[1] This is the other side of a defect which has already been noticed (above, p. 17)—the defect of the limitation of Byzantine scholarship to the one language and the sole literature of Greece.

them also enjoyed, and which reinforced the native genius. They were immersed in life and experience: they knew at first hand something of action and affairs, both secular and ecclesiastical. Photius and Psellus and Plethon are conspicuous among them, and Eustathius of Thessalonica also deserves to be remembered. They are indeed rather the exception than the rule (many of the writers were monks who studied and wrote in the solitude of their cells); but they are notable exceptions. This advantage of immersion in life and experience was backed and supported by another advantage. Men such as Photius and Psellus moved in a Byzantine society which, at any rate in its upper ranges, was a generally cultured society with a common interest in learning and thought. Emperors such as Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus and Manuel II were authors as well as emperors: princesses such as Anna Comnena wrote history, and the mother of Anna Comnena was a student of theology: other princesses had manuscripts copied for them (see below, p. 224, note 1); grand logothetes such as Theodore Metochites were students and essayists (see below, p. 171). The atmosphere of the capital and the court was an atmosphere favourable to scholars.

If there were no renaissances in the Byzantine Empire, in any true sense of the word, there were different periods and epochs in the history of Byzantine culture. Sometimes the fire seems to dwindle into embers and grey ashes: sometimes it burns with a brighter flame. We may distinguish four main epochs; and it is on that basis that the passages and documents translated in this volume have accordingly been arranged.

(*a*) The first epoch extends from the foundation of Constantinople in 324 to the death of the emperor Heraclius in 641. During this period Latin still had some vogue by the side of Greek (see below, p. 65): instruction was given in both languages in the university—a secular institution, part Latin and part Greek—of the reign of Theodosius II (408–50); and the legal activity of Justinian I expressed itself in the Latin of the Code, the Pandects, and the Institutes. But the literature of this first period is essentially and predominantly Greek, whether in the realm of history and in the writings of Procopius, or in the sphere of theology and

religious mysticism (for example the *Celestial Hierarchy* and other works of 'Dionysius the Areopagite' at the end of the fifth century), or again in the sphere of poetry and hymnody, as in the verses of the 'Melode' Romanos, the greatest of Byzantine hymn writers.[1]

(*b*) The second period extends from the death of Heraclius almost to the accession of Basil I, the first emperor of the Macedonian dynasty (641–867): it is a period of the dying down of the fire; a cold and almost barren period. Perhaps the barrenness is partly due to the destruction of iconoclastic literature by their victorious antagonists after a struggle which had lasted, with intermissions, from 726 to 843; but the Isaurian emperors who waged an iconoclastic crusade were themselves no friends either to art or to letters. Leo III closed the oecumenical school of higher studies in Constantinople (see below, p. 50); and though the tradition that he burned its library may be a calumny, it is none the less significant of the tendency of his policy. St. John of Damascus (*circa* 700–50) is the great shining light of this period: his three speeches against the iconoclasts vindicate the cause of spiritual independence (see below, p. 86), and his massive treatise *The Fountain of Knowledge*, as we have already seen, was not only an inspiration of the Church in the East, but also, in a later age, a stimulus to thought in the Church of the West (see above, p. 34). But the Isaurian emperors themselves, if from one point of view they were the enemies of letters, were from another the friends of Hellenism and the votaries of Greek. Leo III began the process of turning the Latin of Justinian into the language of Greece; and his *Ecloga* (*circa* 726) and *Procheiron* gave the judges—at any rate in the realm of civil law and in matters of marriage, wills, and contracts—a new and more intelligible basis for their decisions.

(*c*) The third and greatest period of Byzantine culture covers the three and a half centuries from the middle of the ninth century to the end of the twelfth—from the eve of the accession of the Macedonian dynasty to the end of the Comnenian dynasty and the Latin conquest of Constantinople in 1204. This

[1] The date of Romanos is not certain, but there is reason for thinking that his hymns belong to the sixth century.

was a rich and fecund period. For one thing, as has already been noticed, we owe to it the preservation of much of the ancient literature of Greece: 'our most important manuscripts belong to this period of the revival of classical studies in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries'.[1] Arethas, a pupil of Photius, and archbishop of Caesarea in the early years of the tenth century, had many manuscripts copied at his own expense—manuscripts of Plato, Euclid, Dio of Prusa, and Aelius Aristides. The monks of Studion, at an even earlier date (*circa* 800), had been stimulated by their famous abbot Theodore to undertake the copying of manuscripts, and their library had been enlarged under his impulse by the addition of new copies of the writings not only of Christian but also of pagan authors. At a later date, in the last quarter of the twelfth century, Eustathius the archbishop of Thessalonica rendered a service of the first order to classical scholarship, if not by encouraging the copying of manuscripts of the Greek classics, at any rate by writing scholarly commentaries on Homer and on Pindar, and by using, as the basis of his commentaries, ancient authors and authorities many of which are now lost.

But over and above the preservation of manuscripts and the composition of scholarly commentaries we owe to this great and fertile period of the Byzantine *medium aevum* the main contributions made by the original and native genius of Byzantine scholars and writers. In the latter half of the ninth century there is the commanding figure of Photius, twice patriarch of Constantinople, perhaps the most typical of all the Byzantine churchmen and writers, who has left to us in his *Myriobiblion* a record of the reading and studies of his circle. He may also have been the author of two of the titles of the legal work called the *Epanagōgē* (the titles which define the position and powers of the emperor and the patriarch), and he may also have had a hand in the two 'testaments of advice' supposed to be addressed by the emperor Basil I to his son Leo VI, 'the philosopher'. The century after the age of Photius, the tenth, may be called the century of the encyclopaedists:

[1] Krumbacher, op. cit., p. 16: see below, p. 223, on the manuscripts of Aelius Aristides. It has been suggested that the introduction of a new cursive minuscule after 800 may account for the disappearance of older manuscripts and explain the large number of manuscripts belonging to a later period.

it is the century of a Greek Anthology (the 'Palatine Anthology') collected by Cephalas, the century of the writings due to the initiative of the emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus ('on the administration of the empire', 'on ceremonies', and 'on themes'), the century of the lexicon called 'Suidas', and the century of the scholarly bishop Arethas, who was not only a collector of manuscripts but also a student of the philosophy of Aristotle and Plato. The next century, the eleventh, has Psellus as its dominant figure —a stylist and a versatile figure who wedded rhetoric to philosophy, and who initiated a new age not only in point of style (by renewing and developing the rhetorical graces of the later days of ancient Greece), but also by giving a new vogue to Platonic—and also and even more to neo-Platonic—studies (see below, p. 130). The twelfth century—the century of the Comnenian dynasty—has been called the zenith of Byzantine literature: it is the century in which Anna Comnena, continuing and completing the work begun by her husband Nicephorus Bryennius, wrote the *Alexiad*: it is also the century of the scholarship of Eustathius. But perhaps the zenith may be more justly dated in the latter half of the previous century (1050 onwards)—days of the refoundation of a university in Constantinople: days in which there flourished not only the eloquence and philosophy of Psellus, but also the legal knowledge of Xiphilinus and the Aristotelian scholarship of Michael of Ephesus; days, too, in which untutored laymen such as Kekaumenos and Niculitzas published their reflections on life, and in which an Indian series of animal fables, pointed with political and other morals, was translated into Greek and given to the Byzantine world under the title of *Stephanites and Ichnelates* (see below, p. 141).

(*d*) The last of the four periods in the history of Byzantine *paideia* is the autumn of the Lascarids of Nicaea and the Palaeologi of Constantinople (1204–1453). It is not an unworthy period: indeed it has something of splendour—a fading sunset splendour —which surrounds and gilds the decline of imperial power. There is, in some of the writers (for instance Theodore Metochites), an inflated 'Atticism' of style, which creates a deeper gulf between the language of literature and the language of life; but there is still

good scholarship, and there is still, in several writers, the quality of immersion in life and experience. The fourteenth century produced Thomas Magister, whose thoughts on education, and the duty of the State to support it, may still be read with profit (see below, pp. 161–2): it was also the century of the hesychast movement, of the struggle of Barlaam its opponent and of Palamas its advocate, of the rising of the Zealots at Thessalonica, and of all the ferment and literature to which these movements gave rise (see below, pp. 184 ff.). The fifteenth century, in its turn, produced a remarkable thinker and writer in Gemistus Plethon of Mistra, who not only sought to apply the doctrines of Plato to the improvement of the state of the Peloponnese, but also attempted to found a new 'Hellenic theology' (see below, pp. 196 ff.). In both centuries the connexion with the Latin West grew closer: not only did Byzantine art influence the early painters of Italy, but Byzantine scholarship also began to move to the West and to kindle the fire of the Italian Renaissance. Long before the fall of Constantinople the words *lampada tradunt* may justly be applied to Byzantine scholars; from the fourteenth century onwards they were carrying their books and their scholarship to Italy, and if the lamps were going out in the East, westward the land began to grow bright. Plethon was only one among the Greek scholars who visited Italy and were honoured in Italy; and the Platonic Academy of Florence, which he is reported to have inspired Cosimo de Medici to found, is but one of the gifts of Byzantium to the culture of Western Europe. The transmission of the Greek inheritance to the West was a long process, which was as old as the twelfth century, and grew rapidly in range and vigour during the course of the thirteenth. Byzantium fell in 1453, but she had saved—and transmitted—her inheritance long before the fall.

Some final words may be said about institutions of higher learning—institutions of the nature of a 'general study' or university—and their place in the history of Byzantine culture. There was no continuous and continuously organized system of university instruction in Constantinople, even though the city was the centre and focus of Byzantine life; and the culture of Byzantium, if in some respects it gained, also suffered from the absence of such

a system. It gained, in so far as it was cherished in, and by, the general body of polite society—the Church, the Court, the official classes, as well as the literati who lived in the capital. It was a general social—we may even say 'national'—treasure. A university runs to specialism: it runs to what may be called technique: it introduces professionalism into the realm of scholarship and culture. Byzantine scholars were not specialists (on the contrary they were, if anything, too broad in their interests): they were not professionals, but rather men of general experience in the life of Church and State. That was their merit. On the other hand they also suffered from the absence of a continuous university which could steadily uphold a permanent tradition of scholarly inquiry and the abiding standards of truth and exact science.

Something of a university had existed in Constantinople in the reign of Theodosius II, during the first half of the fifth century: it had given instruction in Latin as well as in Greek: it had had lawyers and a 'philosopher' as well as grammarians among its teachers: and it had possessed a library of many thousands of volumes. By the end of the sixth century this university had decayed and disappeared. In the seventh century the emperor Heraclius, on the initiative of the patriarch Sergius, had founded at Constantinople a new 'oecumenical school', which differed from the previous university in being mainly an ecclesiastical institution controlled by the patriarch. The school lasted for nearly a century, until it was closed by Leo the Isaurian (*circa* 730) on the ground that its teachers were opposed to his policy of iconoclasm. A new and third foundation arose in the middle of the ninth century, just before the accession of the Macedonian dynasty. Caesar Bardas, uncle and virtual regent of the emperor Michael III ('the Drunkard'), founded a school of higher learning, in one of the palaces of Constantinople, which was the signal for a genuine revival of culture. Here all the liberal arts were pursued, and pursued in Greek: they were pursued under imperial patronage, and the professors (among whom was Photius) were paid from the imperial treasury. This school, which may with some justice be called a general study or university (and not, as the school of Heraclius had been, an ecclesiastical institution), gave

a new impulse to scholarship and was an influence of the first order. A fresh impulse, and a fourth foundation, came two centuries later, in 1045. Constantine IX, advised by Psellus and Xiphilinus, reformed and improved the school which Caesar Bardas had instituted. He created two schools—a school or faculty of philosophy, with Psellus at its head under the title of *hypatos philosophias*, and a school or faculty of law, in which Xiphilinus held the office and title of *nomophylax*. Xiphilinus (who was afterwards patriarch) was also among the philosophers, following the doctrine of Aristotle while Psellus followed that of Plato and the neo-Platonists; but the immediate duty of Xiphilinus and his school of law, in which the professors were paid by the government and students were admitted free, was to train officials and lawyers for the service of the State. These two foundations of Constantine IX were the nearest approach to a fully organized university which Byzantium ever attained: they remained at work during the century of the Comneni and down to 1204. After the Latin conquest of Constantinople Nicaea became for a time the centre of Byzantine culture, and the emperor John III Vatatzes used the services of the scholar Blemmydes (see below, p. 151) to collect manuscripts for the libraries of his realm in Thrace and Thessaly and on Mount Athos. After the recovery of Constantinople in 1261, its system of schools of higher learning was restored, and lasted there till the final fall of the city in 1453. The system was, as it had been from the first, a lay system: theology was not cultivated under its auspices: the main study, always dear to the Byzantines, was the study of the Greek classics. But the age of the Palaeologi was also marked by a lively interest in the study of astronomy and mathematics; and the polymath Nicephorus Gregoras (see below, p. 193), stimulated by the grand logothete Theodore Metochites, found time for work on the reform of the calendar and for the writing of astronomical treatises (*circa* 1340–60) as well as for the study of theology and the pursuit of theological polemics.

At the end of this general view of the Byzantine background a brief play of fancy may perhaps be permissible. For the reflective

eye and the retentive memory the city of Constantinople is still haunted by murmurs and pictures of the vanished Byzantium of the past. To visit Alexandria (so the writer has found in his experience) is to see, with the mind's eye, the vanished city of the Ptolemys, its colonnaded streets, and the central tomb of Alexander, behind the bustle of the new city of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. So, too, to visit Constantinople is to hear and see, above and beyond the mosques and the busy shops of Turkish Istanbul, visions and voices of the old 'god-guarded imperial city'. In fancy one hears by the hippodrome the acclamation of the Green party or 'deme', calling aloud their chant *etē polla, Ioustiniane Auguste, tou bikas* (*tu vincas*—'may you be victorious'): in fancy one hears, in St. Sophia, the echoing Christmas hymn of the melode Romanos: in fancy one hears the eloquent voice of Psellus, which drew both Celts and Arabs to his lecture room. *Basileia, ecclesia,* and *paideia* still speak; and they still speak in Greek. But it is a Latin author of the tenth century, Liutprand the bishop of Cremona, who has recorded for us the sights which the eye of imagination can still see as they are projected by him on the screen. One picture is that of the emperor in state, in the Magnaura palace—the palace which housed the school that had been founded by Caesar Bardas a century before Liutprand visited the city and was received by the emperor in the autumn of 949. 'A tree made of brass, but gilded over, stood before the emperor's throne: the boughs were full of birds of different kinds, also made of brass and also gilt, which sang in a chorus of different bird-songs according to their kind. The emperor's throne was constructed with such skill that at one time it was level with the ground, at another it was raised above it, and then, in a moment, it hung up aloft. It was guarded, as it were, by lions of immense size—one could not be sure whether they were made of brass or wood, but they were certainly covered with gold on the surface—which opening their mouths and moving their tongues roared aloud and shook the ground with their tails. Here I was brought into the presence of the emperor, supported on the shoulders of two eunuchs: the lions roared at my coming, and the birds twittered according to their kind: thrice I performed the act of adoration,

prone at full length on the ground; then I raised my head, and lo! the emperor, whom I had just before seen seated almost on the level of the ground, now appeared to my eyes dressed in different robes, almost level with the ceiling of the palace.'

The other picture painted by Liutprand is a picture of the emperor distributing their salaries to his officers, during the week before Easter, in the form of 'maundy' purses and robes. 'A table was placed in the room, ten cubits long and four broad, which had on it coins, collected in purses, according to the number due to each person, with the number marked on the outside of each purse. The recipients then came into the emperor's presence, not in a crowd but in due order, following the summons of an officer who called out their names, one by one, from a list in his hand, according to the rank of each office concerned. The first man called was the master of the household (*rector domus*); and the coins were placed not in his hands but on his shoulders, along with four cloaks. Next to him came the general of the army and the admiral of the fleet: they received the same number of coins and cloaks, because their rank was the same, but the amount being so considerable they did not carry it away on their shoulders—they dragged it laboriously behind them with the aid of assistants. After them were admitted principal officers marked with the number 24: amounts of gold pieces were paid out to them, each receiving his share up to the same number of 24, along with two cloaks. [Other recipients followed in their order, down to the officers whose share was a single pound.] I would not have you think that all this was done in a single day. It began on a Thursday, lasting from the first hour of the day to the fourth, and it was finished by the emperor on the Friday and Saturday.'[1] Such was the pomp, and such the ceremonies, once enacted in Byzantium.

[1] Liutprand, *Antapodosis*, ed. E. Dümmler, vi, cc. 5 and 10.

PART II

THE PERIOD FROM THE ACCESSION OF JUSTINIAN I TO THE DEATH OF HERACLIUS

A.D. 527–641

§ 1. AN EXPOSITION OF HEADS OF ADVICE AND COUNSEL

Addressed by Agapetus, 'deacon of the great and most holy Church of God (St. Sophia), to our most sacred and pious emperor Justinian' (*circa* 530).

This work consists of seventy-two 'heads' (or brief chapters) of advice, based on the writings of Isocrates and the Greek fathers. It is one of the earliest examples of a type of literature (the 'Mirror for Princes') which continued to be practised for centuries, and to be written in many countries and languages. There are Persian and Arabic examples: there are many Byzantine examples during a period of nearly a thousand years: and in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries a large number of such 'mirrors' were written and published in Western Europe.[1] It is a curious fact, which may help to illustrate the vogue of this type of literature, that twenty editions of the 'Exposition' of Agapetus were printed in the sixteenth century (Krumbacher, *Geschichte der Byzantinischen Litteratur*, p. 457).

Cap. 1. 'Having a dignity which is set above all other honours, Sire, you render honour above all to God, who gave you that dignity; inasmuch as He gave you the sceptre of earthly power after the likeness of the heavenly kingdom, to the end that you

[1] A list is given in Otto Gierke's *Natural Law and the Theory of Society* (English translation), pp. 229–30. See also Barker, *Traditions of Civility*, pp. 142–3. The writers of these mirrors *may* have known the 'heads' of Agapetus: like him, at any rate, some of them followed the model of Isocrates' orations addressed to Nicocles the prince of Cyprus. Others, however, used the Roman emperor, Marcus Aurelius, as a model.

should instruct men to hold fast the cause of justice, and should punish the howling of those who rage against that cause; being yourself under the kingship of the law of justice and lawfully king of those who are subject to you.

Cap. 2. 'Like the man at the helm of a ship, the mind of the king, with its many eyes, is always on the watch, keeping a firm hold on the rudder of enforcement of the law and sweeping away by its might the currents of lawlessness, to the end that the ship of the State of the world may not run into the waves of injustice.

Cap. 3. 'The divine lesson which we first learn, O men, is that a man should know himself. For he who knows himself will know God: he who knows God will become like God; a man will become like God when he becomes worthy of Him; and a man becomes worthy of God when he does nothing unworthy of Him, but thinks the things that are God's, speaks what he thinks, and does what he speaks.

Cap. 4. 'Let no man feel conceit about nobility of birth. All men alike have clay for their first ancestor—both those who boast themselves in purple and fine linen, and those who are afflicted by poverty and sickness; both those who are crowned with a diadem, and those who are attendants in the palace. Let us not, therefore, boast of our descent from clay; let us rather be proud of the goodness of our ways.

Cap. 5. 'Know this, thou divinely made image of piety [the writer here addresses the emperor], that the more God deems thee worthy of His great gifts, the greater is the return which thou owest Him. Pay, therefore, thy debt of gratitude to thy Benefactor, who receives the debt paid as a grace, and gives grace in return for grace. For He is always in Himself the first author of grace, and repays grace done as if it were a debt. He asks for gratitude from us—not in the proffering of good words, but in the offering of pious works.

Cap. 6. 'Nothing gives a man such good repute as to be able to do what he wills, and to will and to do acts of kindness (in

Greek, *philanthrōpa*). Therefore, since God of His grace has given you the power which your goodwill towards us needed for our sake, may you both will and do all things as pleases Him Who gave you this power.

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Cap. 9. 'The soul of the king, full of many cares, must be wiped clean like a mirror, that it may always shine with divine illumination, and attain thereby to knowledge of affairs. For there is nothing which has such power to make a man see what is right, as to keep the soul always pure and clean.

Cap. 10. 'Just as, on a voyage, the error of a sailor does little damage to the passengers, but when the steersman himself commits an error it causes the destruction of the whole ship; so in States—when a subject does wrong, he does not injure the community so much as he injures himself, but when the ruler himself does wrong, he inflicts injury on the whole State. Since, therefore, he will render a solemn account if he neglects to do anything which he ought to do, let him always speak and act with strict diligence.

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Cap. 15. 'It is the crown of piety that adorns the king above all the ornaments of kingship. Wealth vanishes; glory perishes. But the glory of god-like government is prolonged for eternal ages, and it sets its possessors beyond the reach of oblivion.

Cap. 16. 'It seems to me very strange that the rich and the poor suffer harm from different things. The rich are afflicted by satiety, and the poor are destroyed by hunger; the rich possess the ends of the earth, and the poor have not where to plant the soles of their feet. In order that both of them may recover health, the remedy of subtraction and addition must be applied, and equality must be substituted for inequality.

Cap. 17. 'There has been revealed in our age that time of felicity which one of the writers of old prophesied as coming to pass when either philosophers were kings or kings were students

of philosophy. Pursuing the study of philosophy, you [Justinian] were counted worthy of kingship; and holding the office of king, you did not desert the study of philosophy. Now if the love of wisdom is what makes philosophy, and if the beginning of wisdom is to fear God—Who is always present in your heart—then what I say is clearly true.

Cap. 18. 'I reckon you as indeed a king because you have the strength to be king and master of your passions, and because you wear the crown of temperance and are clothed with the purple of justice. Other sorts of authority have death for their heir; but kingship such as *this* endures for ever and ever. Other sorts of authority end with this life; but *this* is saved from the pains of eternal punishment.

Cap. 19. 'If you wish to reap the harvest of being honoured by all men, become the common benefactor of all. For there is nothing that moves men to feel goodwill to their ruler so much as the grace of [his] goodwill bestowed on the needy. For obedience which arises from fear is only a simulated adulation, which cheats with the fictitious name of honour those who pay heed thereto.

Cap. 20. 'Kingship in you is rightly to be revered, because it exhibits its authority to foes, and makes kindness the portion of its subjects. Subduing foes by the force of its arms, it is vanquished itself by the unarmed love of its subjects. As far as the wild beast is from the sheep, so great does it count the difference between the two [i.e. the difference between foes and subjects].

Cap. 21. 'In the nature of his body the king is on a level with all other men, but in the authority attached to his dignity he is like God Who rules over all; for he has no man on earth who is higher than he. Therefore, like God, he must never be angry, yet as a mortal man he must never be lifted up in conceit; for if he be honoured by being in the divine image, he is also involved in the earthly image whereby he is taught his equality with other men.

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Cap. 27. 'Impose on yourself the compulsion of observing the laws, since you have no man on earth who is able to apply

compulsion to you. Thus you will testify to the majesty of the laws, by reverencing them above all else; and thus, too, it will be clear to your subjects that any breach of the laws is not free from peril.

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Cap. 30. 'Being entrusted by God with the office of kingship on earth, do not employ wrong-doers in the management of affairs; for he who has given wrong-doers their power will owe an account to God for what they have wrongly done. Therefore let the appointment of officials be made after strict examination.

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Cap. 32. 'Count as your truest friends those who are zealous to do everything with a balanced judgement, not those who praise whatever you say; cherish those who rejoice with you in what is good and frown upon what is the opposite of good; for it is they who really give proof of the truest form of friendship.

Cap. 33. 'Do not let your noble judgement be swayed by the pomp of your earthly power; but rather, as one who holds a power that is perishable, keep your mind unchanged in dealing with changeable affairs, and be neither elated in times of tranquillity nor depressed in times of adversity.

Cap. 34. 'As gold, when it is changed by an artificer, now in one way and now in another, and transformed by him into various kinds of ornaments, none the less remains what it was, and undergoes no change; so you too, most illustrious emperor (*basileus*)—while you turn your exercise of authority now in this way and now in that, and anticipate [here on earth] the honour that dwells in the highest—still remain the same; and though you deal with different matters, you keep your mind unalterably fixed on what is good.

Cap. 35. 'Consider yourself to be surely and truly a king when you rule with the consent of your subjects. For a subject people which is unconsenting revolts when it finds an opportunity; but a people which is attached to its sovereign by the bonds of good will keeps firm and true in its obedience to him.

Cap. 36. 'In order that you may keep the authority of kingship

in good repute, you must hold it for true that your subjects will feel as much indignation against you, if you do wrong, as you do against them when they offend. For no man has the power to instruct a person vested with such authority [as yours]: only the reflection of the wrong-doer himself, proceeding from himself, can do that.

Cap. 37. 'He who has attained to great authority should imitate, so far as he can, the Giver of that authority. If in any way he bears the image of God, Who is over all, and if through Him he holds rule over all, he will imitate God best if he thinks that nothing is more precious than mercy.

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Cap. 40. 'Kingship is the most honoured of all things; and it is so most especially, when the person who is vested with this authority does not incline to self-will, but keeps his mind fixed on equity; turning away from inhumanity as a thing that is bestial, and showing forth humanity as a quality that is God-like.

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Cap. 46. 'As the eye belongs to the body, so the king is fitted to the world, and given to it by God for the rendering of benefits. It is therefore his duty to take thought for all men, as if they were his own limbs, to the end that they may advance in things good and not in things evil.

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Cap. 51. 'It is the business of the sun to illuminate creation with his rays. It is the excellence of a king to have pity on the needy; and thereby a pious king is the more illustrious. For the sun gives place to the coming of night, but the king yields not to the onset of things evil; rather he confutes the hidden things of iniquity with the light of truth.

Cap. 52. 'Previous kings have been adorned by their office: you, most excellent Sire, have made your office even more illustrious, tempering the pomp of authority with your gentleness, and vanquishing the fears of those who approach you by your

goodness. Wherefore all who are in need of mercy cast anchor in the harbour of your tranquillity, and, freed by you from the waves of calamity, they send up to you their hymns of thanksgiving.

Cap. 53. 'By as much as you excel all others in power, seek also to outshine them in deeds; for it is in proportion to the magnitude of your power that you must expect men to require at your hands the accomplishment of good. And therefore, in order that you may be proclaimed king by God with the crown of invincible kingship, you must also acquire the garland of well-doing to the poor.

Cap. 54. 'Before you command what you desire, take thought that you prudently enjoin what is right. The tongue is a slippery tool, and brings great danger on the negligent; but if you set pious reflection to guard it, then it strikes up, like music, the harmonious song of virtue.

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Cap. 59. 'Guide your kingdom aright here below, that it may become for you a ladder to the glory above. Those who govern well an earthly kingdom are deemed worthy also of the heavenly; and they are good governors of the earthly kingdom who show a paternal affection to their subjects and receive from them in return the awe which is proper to rulers—preventing them by threats from stumbling, and not bringing trials upon them by punishments.

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Cap. 61. 'Having received the sceptre of kingship from God, take thought how you may please Him Who gave it; and having been honoured above all men by Him, hasten to honour Him more than all other men. And this He regards as the highest honour you can render—that you look upon those whom He has fashioned as if they were Himself, and fulfil the measure of your well-doing as if it were the payment of debts.

Cap. 62. 'Every man who desires salvation ought to have

recourse to aid from above; but the king should do so above all others, since he has the care of all men. For if he is protected by God, he nobly vanquishes his enemies, and zealously gives his subjects security.

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Cap. 66. 'I say that it is wickedness in a private person to do things that are mean and deserving of punishment, but it is badness in a ruler *not* to do things that are good and that assist salvation. A ruler is not justified by abstaining from evil; it is the compass of his good deeds which is a crown to him. Let him, therefore, not only study to avoid badness; let him also strive to lay hold on justice.

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Cap. 68. 'The king is sovereign over all; but he is also, along with all, the servant of God. He will most especially be called sovereign when he is master of himself, and not a slave to improper pleasures; when, having as his ally pious reflection, which is the unconquered lord of irrational passions, he conquers the all-powerful affections [of the senses] with the panoply of temperance.

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Cap. 72. 'Strive for ever, unconquered king; and even as those who begin to climb a ladder do not halt in their upward movement till they reach the topmost rungs, so do you persevere in your climbing upward to what is good, that you may also enjoy the kingdom which is above. May Christ grant you that kingdom, along with the empress your wife; Who is King of kings and of the subjects of kings, for ever and ever. Amen.'[1]

Note. It may be of some service to the reader if a list is appended here of the various treatises on kingship ('the office of a king', or 'the education of a king', or 'advice to a king') which recur in the course of Byzantine history. Most of them are noticed, and passages from them are translated, in the general course of this volume: a few (numbers 4 and 14 below) are mentioned only in this note.

[1] From the text in the edition of B. Damke, Basle, 1633.

1. Agapetus: *Heads of Advice and Counsel*, addressed to Justinian I (*circa* 530).

2. The Dialogue *De Scientia Politica*, mainly concerned with the theme of kingship, and possibly composed during the reign of Justinian I.

3. The romance *Barlaam and Josaphat* (of the seventh or the eighth century), which follows the argument of Agapetus in the passages that deal with kingship.

4. The two 'exhortations' addressed by Basil I, some time after 867, to his son the future emperor Leo VI (the 'Wise' or the 'Philosopher'). These *paraineseis* follow the model of the orations addressed by Isocrates to Nicocles of Cyprus, but they are also based on the example of the work of Agapetus: they were probably written for Basil I by a scholar, who may have been Photius (see below, p. 110). They are printed in Migne, *Patrologia Graeco-Latina*, cvii, and mainly consist of moral commonplaces.

5. The letter of Photius to a prince of Bulgaria 'on the function of a prince', an exhortation to a convert (*circa* 860). Photius may also have drafted the chapter of the *Epanagōgē* which defines the powers of the *Basileus*, and he may also have compiled the 'exhortations' addressed to Leo VI, whose tutor he was for a time.

[6. If the oration of pseudo-Aristides *eis basilea* (to a king) is a Byzantine work, it may be dated in the period between the life of Photius and that of Psellus (*circa* 860–1060).]

7. The brief essay of Niculitzas *De Officio Regis* (*circa* 1080).

8. The argument about kingship and a king's advisers in the collection of fables called *Stephanites and Ichnelates* (*circa* 1080).

9. The *Institutio Regia* of Theophylact, archbishop of Bulgaria (*circa* 1100).

10. The *Andrias Basilikos* of Nicephorus Blemmydes (*circa* 1260).

11. The treatises of Thomas Magister *De Regis Officiis* and *De Subditorum Officiis* (*peri basileias* and *peri politeias*), at the end of the thirteenth century.

12. The letter of the patriarch Antonius to the Grand Prince of Russia on the union of *Basileia* and *Ecclēsia*, and on the universality of the *Basileia* (*circa* 1395).

13. The addresses of Gemistus Plethon to Manuel II and to his son Theodore, the 'despot' of the Peloponnese (*circa* 1415).

14. The suggestions for imperial education (*hypothēkai basilikēs agōgēs*) addressed by Manuel II to his son. Manuel, who was also a

writer of philosophical treatises and of hymns, wrote two works on political themes—the hundred chapters of the 'suggestions', which elaborate an ancient theme, and a brief address (or rhetorical exercise) 'as from a benevolent ruler to loyal subjects'. He was himself a remarkable ruler (1391–1425), a statesman as well as a scholar, who travelled for some years in Western Europe in the vain hope of securing help for his doomed Empire. His *hypothēkai* are based on the familiar model of the Cyprian orations of Isocrates: they were printed in 1578 (along with his rhetorical exercises) by J. A. Leunclavius (Löwenklau), and dedicated by the editor to the Medici family, with which Manuel had come into contact in the course of his Western travels.

§ 2. A BYZANTINE DIALOGUE *DE SCIENTIA POLITICA*[1]

A. *Introduction*

In 1827 Cardinal Mai printed in his *Scriptorum Veterum Nova Collectio* (ii. 571–609) the fragments of a dialogue in Greek 'on political science' which appears to be partly based on Plato's *Republic* and partly on Cicero's *De Republica*. He ascribed these fragments, probably in error, to a certain Peter who held the post of *magister officiorum* under the emperor Justinian I; and he did so on the assumption that the dialogue (entitled in Greek *peri politikēs epistēmēs*) was identical with a work, entitled *peri politikēs katastaseōs*, which is ascribed to this Peter in the lexicon that goes by the name of Suidas. But the work of Peter dealt with political *institutions* (*katastasis* is a word meaning much the same as our word 'constitution'), and not with political *science*; and there is thus no valid reason for the identification suggested by Mai. Another suggestion which he made has more probability, though it, too, is not without difficulties. This suggestion is that the dialogue on

[1] The translator has found it difficult to cope with the fragmentary and obscure text of this dialogue; and perhaps he ought to have refrained from the attempt. The argument throws little light on the political thought of the Byzantine Empire: it teaches no lesson, and suggests no moral, that is specifically Byzantine. But it may be of interest to the reader as an attempt by a Byzantine scholar (though hardly a successful attempt) to weld into a unity, in the form of a dialogue, some memories of Plato, some fragments of Cicero, and some elements of the theory of monarchy which Eusebius of Caesarea had borrowed from later Greek thought, and applied to the new Christian Empire, in his *Laus Constantini*.

political science is to be identified with a work mentioned by Photius in his *Myriobiblion* (*codex* 37) as having been read in the circle which gathered in his house for study (see below, p. 110). The passage of the *Myriobiblion* in which this work is mentioned runs as follows:

'There was read a work on politics [*peri politikēs*], which introduces the patrician Menas and the referendarius Thomas as the interlocutors in a dialogue.[1] The discourse includes six books, in which the author introduces another type of constitution, besides those described by ancient authors, which he calls by the name of the 'dicaearchan' type.[2] He also criticizes, with justice, the *Republic* of Plato.[3] The form of constitution which they themselves [i.e. the two speakers in the dialogue] propose ought, they say, to be compounded from the three types—the monarchical, the aristocratic, and the democratic—with each type of constitution contributing its own essential element, and thereby making it [i.e. the form advocated by the speakers] truly the best.[4]

We have only fragments of two books of the dialogue (IV and V) in the text printed by Mai. There *may* have been six; and these six *may* have been identical with the six books of the work read in the circle which gathered in Photius' house. But there is a con-

[1] Menas may, as Mai suggests, be a shortened form of the name Menedorus which is used in the dialogue, as Thomas is obviously the shorter form of the name Thomasius given to the other interlocutor. Menas (or Mennas) and Thomas, as Mai also notes (op. cit., p. 571, nn. 1 and 2), are mentioned in legal documents of the reign of Justinian I, and seem to have been connected with the work of codification which was the great achievement of the reign.

[2] Photius would seem to be referring to the Peripatetic Dicaearchus (of the third century B.C.), to whom is ascribed a work called *Tripoliticus*, which may, as its title suggests, have propounded the theory of the mixed constitution—uniting monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy—which was afterwards expounded by Polybius and Cicero (see Barker, *From Alexander to Constantine*, p. 50). But it has been suggested that 'the dicaearchan type' (with a small d) is to be interpreted as 'the just-rule type' (from *dikaios* and *archē*). This seems unlikely.

[3] This statement of Photius corresponds with the ninth heading of the table of contents prefixed to book V of the dialogue, which states that 'views are expressed about polity unlike the views expressed by other writers, wherein objection is also taken to some of the views of Plato'. Unfortunately there is nothing in the actual substance of the fifth book which corresponds with this heading; and we cannot therefore be certain that the dialogue actually criticized Plato's *Republic*, as Photius tells us that the work read in his circle did.

[4] Again, unfortunately, there is no plan of a mixed constitution suggested in the surviving fragments of the dialogue, and no reference to the 'dicaearchan' type.

siderable discrepancy between the contents of the dialogue, in the fragments which have come down to us, and the description given by Photius of the work read in his circle; and though it is possible that the two were identical, it is also possible that they were separate and different works. Book IV of the dialogue, as it is printed by Mai, deals with the army and military matters—topics not mentioned by Photius: book V is occupied almost entirely with monarchy and the *imitatio Dei* which is stated to be the essence of monarchy—and this again is a topic not mentioned by Photius. The only correspondence between the dialogue on political science and the work described by Photius is to be found not in any part of the actual text of the dialogue, but only in one of the headings contained in the table of contents prefixed to book V; and there is nothing in the actual text of the book which corresponds to that heading. Moreover the core and essence of the work described by Photius—the theory of a mixed constitution—is entirely absent from the surviving fragments of the text of the dialogue. The only verdict possible on the suggestion made by Mai (that the dialogue is to be identified with the work described by Photius) is 'Not Proven'; and the path of wisdom is to accept the fragments of the dialogue, in themselves and by themselves, without any reference to Photius, and to examine them in their own light.

On that basis we can only say that we are dealing with an unknown author, who wrote at an unknown date. But it is possible to suggest an approximate date at which the dialogue may have been written. The author was acquainted with some of the writings of Cicero; he refers to Cicero's *De Republica*, and he quotes his *Tusculanae Quaestiones*; he also mentions Juvenal; he even refers to 'the Etruscan Firminus', who may perhaps be Frontinus, a Latin writer on the art of war in the reign of the emperor Domitian. He can also, in his own phrase, 'Romaize' and use a Latin word; and he would thus appear to be generally conversant with Latin literature. This would suggest that he lived in the sixth century, when Latin was still known and used in Constantinople, and when it could still be employed as the language of Justinian's Code and his Pandects and Institutes. (Afterwards, from the

seventh century onwards, the knowledge of Latin faded in the Eastern Empire: Greek became the language of legislation, and the only language known to scholars; nor was it until the twelfth and thirteenth centuries that some knowledge of Latin and Latin literature was again recovered.) In the sixth century a Byzantine scholar would still be able to read the *De Republica* of Cicero—if he could find a copy, as we may assume that the author of the dialogue on political science did, in one of the libraries of Constantinople[1]—and he could use it, along with the writings of Plato and Xenophon's *Memorabilia* (which he quotes), in constructing a dialogue on political theory. An additional argument for dating the dialogue in, or about, the reign of Justinian may be derived from the names of the two speakers, if—as Mai suggests—they are to be identified with the Menas (or Mennas) and Thomas mentioned by Justinian as concerned in the legislative work of his reign. We may therefore conclude, with some degree of probability, that the dialogue is a work of the sixth century, by an unknown author who was acquainted with Latin as well as Greek literature on politics and political theory.

To what extent the author actually used the *De Republica* of Cicero is a matter of doubt, which deserves investigation by scholars who are interested in the philosophy of Cicero. In form the dialogue is analogous to the dialogues of Cicero rather than to the Platonic dialogues: in substance, it is indebted (so far as political theory is concerned) to Plato rather than to Cicero; and perhaps it is even more indebted to Eusebius (in his *Laus Constantini*), and to the Greek writers 'On Kingship' whose writings were excerpted by Stobaeus in the fifth century,[2] than it is either to Plato or Cicero. Indeed, on a close inquiry into the text of the dialogue, and a comparison of it with what may conceivably be parallel passages in the *De Republica*, it is only possible to find in

[1] In Western Europe the *De Republica* disappeared for centuries (except for a famous passage in the sixth and last book, 'The Dream of Scipio', which was preserved in the *Commentaries* of Macrobius); and it was only in 1820 that it was partially recovered, to the extent of about one-third of the whole, from a Vatican palimpsest. The author of the dialogue on political science *may* have had before him all the six books of the original text.

[2] See Barker, *From Alexander to Constantine*, pp. 366, 370–1, and 478. It is the doctrine of kingship as 'an imitation of God' which is here in question.

the dialogue three references to Cicero's writings which seem tolerably certain. Only one of these is an *explicit* reference to Cicero; this comes in chapter xv of book v, and there the reference is to the *De Oratore* and not to the *De Republica*, though the statement of Cicero quoted by the author of the dialogue may have been repeated by him in a lost passage of the *De Republica* (see below, p. 74). A second reference, though it is not explicit, is more important. This comes at the end of chapter ix of book v, where the author of the dialogue speaks of each citizen as discharging the duties of his station in harmony, like a well-tuned lyre, and of the constitution as moving to the strains of a general harmonious symphony (see below, p. 72). This has a close parallel in the *De Republica* (II. xlii. 69); though it is only fair to add that the application of this musical analogy to political theory is as old as Pythagoras and was common among the Neo-Pythagoreans.[1] The third reference is somewhat tenuous, and it hardly proves any sort of connexion between Cicero and the author of the dialogue. It comes in a passage of chapter ix of book v, where the

[1] The passage in the *De Republica* deserves quotation: 'I see now', Laelius (one of the speakers in the dialogue) is made to say, 'what is the office and duty to which you would appoint the man for whom I was waiting [i.e. the ideal *rector et gubernator reipublicae*]. It is almost wholly this one duty (for in this nearly all others are included)—never to cease from watching and contemplating himself; to summon others to imitation of himself; to show himself by the splendour of his mind and life as an example to his fellow citizens. Just as there is for the lute or the pipe—and for song itself and the use of the voice—a harmony which has to be gained and maintained from the use of different sounds, a harmony in which trained ears cannot bear the entrance of any change or discordant note; and just as that harmony, which comes from the tempering of most dissimilar voices, is notwithstanding endowed with concord and consonance, so it is also with States. When the highest and lowest and middle classes of a State are brought into mutual relation, like notes in music, by the use of tempered reason, there arises a political harmony, through the agreement of most dissimilar elements. What musicians call harmony, in the sphere of song, is in the same order as concord in the sphere of politics—concord the firmest and best guarantee of stability in every State—and this concord cannot at all exist in the absence of justice.'

There is obviously something of a parallel between this chapter of the *De Republica* and the dialogue. But not only is the use of the musical analogy in the sphere of political theory a commonplace in many authors before and after Cicero, so that the author of the dialogue might well have used it without reference to Cicero: it has also to be added that Cicero is not dealing with monarchy pure and simple, as the author of the dialogue is. His *rector reipublicae* is not a pure monarch: he may be one person, or he may be a group: and whether the *rector* be one or more than one, his function is to produce a spirit of concord in a *mixed* type of State. (See Barker, *From Alexander to Constantine*, pp. 191–2.)

author of the dialogue speaks of the king as being 'a father of his subjects—showing a father's forethought for his people, and living wholly and finally not for himself . . . but for his subjects' (see below, p. 71). In the same way Cicero (in book II, chapter XXXV, of the *De Republica*) makes Scipio say that if one of the three unmixed constitutions has to be chosen, he would for his part choose monarchy, 'and this because the name of king has, as it were, a paternal sound, as of a man who consults the interests and seeks the security of his fellow citizens more zealously than . . .' [the rest of the sentence has almost entirely disappeared].

The upshot of the matter is that there is no *certain* reference to Cicero's *De Republica* in the dialogue on political science. There *may* be some reference. But all that is certain is (1) that the author of the dialogue quotes a passage from Cicero's *De Oratore* (which may have been repeated in a part of the *De Republica* now lost), and (2) that he promises in the last heading of the table of contents prefixed by him to book V 'a comparison of the polity according to Plato with that according to Cicero' (see below, p. 69)—a promise which *may* have been fulfilled in some lost portion of the dialogue, but which is *not* fulfilled in any of the surviving fragments. On the whole one is tempted to think that Cardinal Mai, having discovered and printed the fragments of the Vatican palimpsest of the *De Republica* in 1820, and then printed the fragments of the *peri politikēs epistēmēs* in 1827, was led to connect the two more closely than the actual facts of the case will allow.

B. *The Contents of the Dialogue (Book V)*

The fragmentary eight chapters of book IV are mainly concerned with military matters, and, more especially, with a vindication of the importance of infantry troops. In one of the chapters (c. 4) there is a quotation from 'the Etruscan Firminus', who had described an infantry force, arrayed in the field, as 'a truly inviolable wall, a living wall, a moving wall, a wall with a mind'. In another (c. 5) there is a reference to Cicero's remarks on the Roman army and the endurance of the Roman legionaries, who carried not only

their equipment (and that as easily as if it were their own limbs), but also provisions for several days.[1]

Book v begins with a table of contents, under ten headings. The first eight headings are all concerned with the theme of kingship (one of the main topics being that 'the true king ought to steer things human towards the imitation of the Deity and things divine'): the ninth heading is to the effect that 'views are expressed about polity unlike the views of Plato'; and the tenth and last heading promises 'a comparison of the polity according to Plato with that according to Cicero' (which may mean a comparison of Plato's *Republic* with Cicero's *De Republica*) 'and further of the whole of Plato's philosophy with that of Aristotle'. Actually, the sixteen chapters of book v as printed in Mai's edition seem to differ, so far as their argument can be followed in the fragmentary and defective text, from the ten headings stated in the table of contents (as they also differ from the summary given by Photius of the work on politics read in his circle). A brief analysis of the argument of these sixteen chapters, with a translation of some few passages, is all that is here attempted.

In the first chapter of book v a transition is made from the theme of book iv, which had been concerned 'with the guardians and military science', to the theme of kingship. The new stage of the argument begins with a question. Is it possible to find a theory of that 'imitation of God' which has been shown (so the author seems to say) to be the nature of really true kingship? To omit the attempt would be like making a statue without any head. Now if we were trying to understand the nature of man and man's humanity, we should inquire what man has in common with animals and plants, and what there is in him which is unique. Ought we not, therefore, in trying to understand the nature of kings and kingship to inquire what the science of kingship (*basilikē epistēmē*) has in common with other sciences, and what there is in it which is unique?

The next two chapters (ii and iii) defeat analysis. But light begins to dawn in the argument of chapter iv. Here it is suggested

[1] Mai refers to *Quaestiones Tusculanae*, ii, c. 16, here quoted by the author of the dialogue.

that the analogy of the doctor and the art of medicine throws light on the nature of the king and the science of kingship. Medicine requires an equipment of three things—rules of the art (*nomoi*); a code of conduct or professional ethics (*dogmata*); habits of actual practice (*kat'energeian epitēdeumata*) which give effect to the rules and the code, and thus make medical attention an operative agency. In the same way kingship also requires *its* equipment. A king, concerned with political affairs, has for his aim the health or well-being of the State, as a body founded on the basis of justice; he has the operation of that well-being as his final end; and the security or welfare of his subjects is the consequent result of his activity. He too, therefore, like the doctor, requires rules or laws; he too requires a code of conduct; he too requires habits of actual practice. Five rules or laws are suggested in the rest of the chapter. The first law, directed to the lawful accession and proclamation (*anagoreusis*) of a king—a law to be enacted by kingship for itself—is a law setting forth the due and proper form in which he should be invested with the royal power, as the gift of God and the offering of the people.[1] A second law determines the nature of the Senate; a third, the nomination of bishops (*archiereis*); a fourth, the appointment of officials (*archontes*); and a fifth is concerned with civil laws and their enforcement, 'for a good king should think that such [enforcement] is more to be regarded with awe by himself than by his subjects'.

In chapter vi the argument proceeds from laws to 'habits of practice', omitting any consideration of a 'code of conduct' (*dogmata*). The theme now pursued appears to be the Platonic theme that the rulers or officials of the State should not engage in business or economic activities: they should attend to their specific function (*idioprattein*), and observe the duties proper to the station in which they are placed. But the chapter is disconnected, and as it begins with an omission, so it ends in scattered jottings. The last of these jottings is to the effect that the chief and sovereign object to be sought by a king is 'an imitation of God among men; this is kingship, and the [true] king will be one who is, indeed, given

[1] On the crown as the gift of God and the offering of the people see J. B. Bury, *Selected Essays*, pp. 101 ff., and J. C. S. Runciman, *Byzantine Civilisation*, pp. 62 ff.

by God to men, but who also [governs] them justly, and takes his place in the constitution by virtue of civil law (*politikos nomos*)'.

Again there is a gap (*immanis lacuna*, in the words of Mai). In the chapter after this gap—chapter vii—the author turns to high philosophy and the Platonic Idea of the Good; and arguing, it would seem, from the analogy of the order and government of the Universe, he depicts the king as a mortal god, governing his State as God governs the Universe. 'A polity needs must have a government which is like that of God in dignity and in power; . . . kingship alone is such a government, and a king—so far as it is possible [for man]—is like, and is named by a name like, the heavenly King. Though he is a corruptible being in comparison with One who is incorruptible, he nevertheless bears the divine likeness in his person, and he is unique among men in bearing that likeness twice over—once as a man in the company of men, and once as a king lifted above other men. . . . When he has attained such a station, a man who is a philosopher-king and a king-philosopher, after the manner of the doctrine of Plato, will be the sort of whom we have spoken; and being set over the world [*cosmos*] he will naturally seek, to the best of his power, to act as king in the manner of Him whose copy and image he is—otherwise he would not be a true king, but would only bear idly an empty name.'

Chapter viii is brief, and merely incidental. In chapter ix the argument turns to the *operation* of kingship. 'Since the king wishes to be like God, it is meet and right that he should be good and do good to his subjects. There are two ways of beneficence which he can follow. The first is concerned with the disposition of men's mind towards virtue, and this consists in the teaching which comes from his example rather than from his words: it is the greatest of all powers for the education of subjects. The second way is concerned with observance of the law and of all forms of good civil order. . . . He is the father of his subjects, and far more careful of them than are their natural parents; . . . herein he must imitate God, who is called the father of men, by showing a father's forethought for his people, and by living wholly and finally not for himself or for his own sake but for his subjects and

for their sake: indeed he must lay down his life for them in case of need . . . as Codrus did for the Athenians. He must regulate not only himself, and whatever depends on himself, but also the officials who surround his person and act as the prime agents of political affairs: he need not concern himself directly with matters remote from the centre or with subordinate officials; he must cause political directives to flow in wisdom from the fountain of his thought into the channels of administration, and he must see that they go through the higher officials and instances straight to their destination.[1] Then, and on that basis, each citizen will discharge the duties of his station (*ta idia prattein*) in harmony, like a well-tuned lyre; and the constitution of the State, moving to the strains of a general harmonious symphony, will be all the more founded on justice and grounded in stability.'[2]

The following chapters, x, xi, and xii, are all fragmentary. But chapter xiii is both intelligible and suggestive. 'What opinion shall we entertain about political science? Shall we hold that God, in the great goodness of His providence for the colony (*apoikia*) of mankind which He sent out from the fatherland on high and ordained to live in this quarter of the Universe[3]—shall we hold that He, to ensure the proper order of things on this earth, contrived a divine form of discipline, by which I mean the knowledge and science of politics, whereby men might be able to return to their mother-city on high, at appointed epochs of time, and to bring down [lessons] worthy of its immortal polity? . . . Let us assume that to be so. Then, I take it, the argument has fully shown . . . what manner of man a good king is who bears in himself the image of God, and how such a king will order the polity of his State by his imitation of God. . . . So it will not, I take it, be wrong for us to treat more exactly of the matter of the imitation of God, in order that we may attain a well-founded view of such imitation. . . . Wherefore our argument will not

[1] The argument here is like that of the Pseudo-Aristotelian treatise *De Mundo*; see Barker, op. cit., pp. 292–3.

[2] Mai cites Cicero, *De Republica*, ii. 42 (see above, p. 67).

[3] Dio of Prusa had used the same metaphor of the colony in his *Charidemus*, § 26, where he says that 'the gods . . . planted mankind on the earth, which was then void and empty, as a sort of colony of themselves . . . just as great and prosperous states plant out smaller states'.

shrink from the theme of the imitation of God, [which is brought to pass] through the beneficence of God, and which, wherever it occurs, clearly does so in those who enjoy His beneficence.'

The following chapters develop this theme (xiv–xvi). Menas, who is, as it were, the Socrates of the dialogue, pursues the argument with Thomas, whose function it is to assent to the propositions which he advances. '*Menas*. That the likeness of the *cosmos* is naturally present in man, even if the *cosmos* be greater than he—present as much as, and in the same way as, that of the ancestor is present in a descendant, or that of the creator is present in the creation—this is a proposition which still more clearly commands our belief. *Thomas*. Certainly: all these enjoy the benefit [of their likeness to their original] equally, in proportion to their merits. . . . *Menas*. So the man who is in fact kingly moves in harmony with heaven and the *Cosmos*. . . . And what is suggested in the prayer of Socrates [really Cleanthes] is not a matter of inevitability, or without conscious purpose, but it clearly appears to be brought about by [man] himself, through a certain natural and spontaneous movement. This is what is said in that prayer, "Lead me, O Zeus, and thou too Destiny, whithersoever I am appointed by you to go; for I will follow you readily. And if I am unwilling to go, because I have fallen into wrong-doing—I will follow none the less."[1]. . . Therefore he [? the man who is in fact kingly] will not be troubled when he is confronted by anything that happens to man: rather he will consort cheerfully with his fellows, and he will pass his days in this mortal life as though it were a festival, being always well prepared for his going hence, and taking no care for the things of the body, but rather longing for the time of his departure from it and for the day of change to the things hoped for in the future. *Thomas*. That would indeed be what one would expect of a man who had already, while still in the body and among men, preferred to look to that goal, and had used his mind and knowledge to practise and exhibit in advance the signs and tokens whereby the knowledge proper to kingship differs

[1] The prayer of Cleanthes is reported in the *Discourses of Epictetus*. See Barker, op. cit., p. 38. It is quoted by the author of the dialogue with some slips, which are corrected in the translation here given.

from the knowledge of private persons. *Menas.* Say, rather, [who had practised and exhibited] signs of [actual] converse with what is most divine, not of converse . . . with my theory [of it]. So I take it, Thomas, that what we said before about kingship—that it was possible to search into its nature by conjecture, rather than in assurance of truth, [and without any abstract reasoning, but with guidance from the fruits of discussion]—has now been borne out as possible. . . . And I think that this is the case alike in regard to true kingship and in respect of the man who corresponds to its nature [i.e. the true king]. It has also been most clearly shown that the greatest good among men is to be equipped with knowledge of politics: . . . nothing superior, or even equal, to it can possibly be found.'

C. xv. The argument now proceeds to cite the authority of ancient thinkers in favour of these views. 'There is on our side Socrates, with his associates and the disciples who proceeded from his teaching like rivers from the ocean: men of divine stature in virtue and culture, and the lights in their day not only of Greece but also of all the world. To that company belong Plato, Xenophon, Aristotle, and the rest of the philosophers; for Cicero is right in calling Socrates the founder—or, to use a Latin term, the *princeps*—of general and true philosophy.[1] Among these followers of Socrates Plato [deserves our notice], who says that the only sort of polity possible—the only way for the whole human race to attain salvation—is that the natures which now move separately, each along its own path, should be brought together, and that philosophy and political authority should accordingly be united.' The author then quotes from Xenophon's *Memorabilia*; and acknowledging his debt to all these predecessors he claims for the persons of his dialogue that 'if they have shrunk in terror from abstract reasoning, they have at any rate established their conclusions by three lines of argument: first by "right opinion" [or as Plato calls it *orthē doxa*]; secondly by reason and truth [whatever that may mean]; and thirdly by the testimonies just

[1] A passage in Cicero which corresponds to this statement comes not in the *De Republica*, but in the *De Oratore* (III. xvi). Mai, however, suggests (as noted above, p. 67) that something similar may have been said by Cicero in the *De Republica*.

produced.' But what these conclusions are can hardly be said to be clear.

C. xvi. The last chapter is an argument, in favour of political science, which is based on the use of analogies drawn, in the manner of Plato, from other human arts. 'If you asked a man to look after sheep and goats in the countryside, when he did not know the art of a shepherd or goat-herd and had no experience of that art, what would he answer? Of course he would say that he could not do what he had never learned to do.' The same would also be true of the other arts, from medicine and carpentry down to the 'idle' arts of music and dancing. Now look at the art of politics. 'Most men—I do not say all, lest I should be accused of exaggeration—will push their way into political office without having any idea at all of the science of politics; they will even venture on kingship itself; they are ready to purchase office by money, or by flattery and courting their fellows at all times and in all seasons. . . . This, I affirm, is the worst of diseases: it is the mother and nurse of all political evil; and the worst of all the afflictions it brings is this—that bad men are not visited with the dishonour [they deserve].'

This is the end of the argument. But the reader may feel that though he has reached the end of the tunnel, he has not yet seen any light.

§ 3. JUSTINIAN I ON THE CHURCH AND THE EMPIRE

From the preface to *Novella* VI (on the ordination of bishops and other clergy) addressed by the emperor to the patriarch of Constantinople.

From Constantine to Justinian there had been little difference between *imperium* and *sacerdotium*: the emperor had been regarded as a bishop and saluted as *sacerdos* and *archiereus*. 'It was Justinian who finally recognised that a distinction must be made between the imperial authority and the Christian priesthood.'[1] That distinction is drawn in the following passage; but the connexion between the two is also emphasized.

'The greatest blessings of mankind are the gifts of God which

[1] N. H. Baynes, *Byzantine Studies and other Essays*, p. 50.

have been granted us by the mercy on high—the priesthood and the imperial authority. The priesthood ministers to things divine: the imperial authority is set over, and shows diligence in, things human; but both proceed from one and the same source, and both adorn the life of man. Nothing, therefore, will be a greater matter of concern to the emperor than the dignity and honour (*honestas*) of the clergy; the more as they offer prayers to God without ceasing on his behalf. For if the priesthood be in all respects without blame, and full of faith before God, and if the imperial authority rightly and duly adorn the commonwealth committed to its charge, there will ensue a happy concord which will bring forth all good things for mankind. We therefore have the greatest concern for true doctrines of the God-head and the dignity and honour of the clergy; and we believe that if they maintain that dignity and honour we shall gain thereby the greatest of gifts, holding fast what we already have and laying hold on what is yet to come. "All things", it is said, "are done well and truly if they start from a beginning that is worthy and pleasing in the sight of God." We believe that this will come to pass if observance be paid to the holy rules which have been handed down by the Apostles —those righteous guardians and ministers of the Word of God, who are ever to be praised and adored—and have since been preserved and interpreted by the holy Fathers.'

There follows, in the first chapter of the *Novella*, a statement of the qualifications necessary for the office of bishop, which is repeated or summarized in Titulus VIII of the *Epanagōgē* (see below, p. 93). With the general view stated in the *Novella* we may compare (1) that of Titles II and III of the *Epanagōgē*, and (2) that of Balsamon (see below, pp. 105 ff.).

§ 4. THE CAREER OF A BYZANTINE OFFICIAL AND SCHOLAR

John the Lydian wrote a treatise *De Magistratibus* in the latter part of the reign of Justinian I (*circa* 554). It dealt with the internal organization and administration of the Empire. In its course the author gives a brief account of his own career, which is of interest not only as a personal document, but also as showing the blend of scholarship and administrative work which was a constant feature

of Byzantine life, and which is no less notable in the fourteenth century, in the career of Theodore Metochites, than it was in the sixth century and in the person of John the Lydian. His service was on the legal side; but in the course of his legal work he not only mastered Latin, but also found time for literature and literary composition.

Book III, c. 26. 'In my twenty-first year . . . .[1] I left my birthplace, Philadelphia, a city in Lydia which lies at the foot of Mount Tmolus, and I came to this blessed city [Constantinople]. I considered much in my mind the remembrancers of the court (*memorialioi tēs aulēs*),[2] and I determined to go and take a post [literally, to wear the girdle] in the service along with them. In order that I might not be thought to be wasting the time that intervened, I determined to attend lectures in philosophy. Agapius was then alive, of whom the poet Christodorus said, in the book he wrote about the disciples of the great Proclus,[3]

Last, but yet first of all;

and from him I learned the rudiments of the doctrines of Aristotle and heard some account of Platonic philosophy. Fortune, thinking to impel me into the career of service, brought it about that Zoticus, my fellow citizen, who had a great regard for me, was at this time promoted to the head of the *praetorium*,[4] under the most gracious of all emperors, Anastasius; and Zoticus, who could compel as well as persuade me, had me enrolled as one of the clerks (*tachygraphoi*) in his office.

c. 27. 'That I might not perchance be idle, my chief showed me every way of earning money, so that during all the time of his holding office—which was not long, and lasted a little more than a year—I prudently made an income of not less than 1,000 gold pieces. In my natural gratitude—how could I feel otherwise?—I

[1] John the Lydian came to Constantinople in the latter years of the reign of Anastasius I (491–518).

[2] It is not clear from the narrative what the court was—whether it was the court of the eparch (or prefect) who exercised jurisdiction in the city, or the court of the Logothete of the Praetorium.

[3] A neo-Platonist philosopher of the Athenian school (*circa* 450).

[4] The Logothete of the Praetorium assisted the eparch of Constantinople in his judicial activities.

wrote a short encomium upon him; and he was so greatly delighted by it that he told me to take a gold piece from the table for each verse I had written. The officers appointed to their posts by what was called the Alpha Beta Section [? the department of the court which dealt with matters of finance] then did an unprecedented thing: they invited me to serve with them as first *chartularios*—a post in which only two other persons, both of them already advanced in years, had before been associated with them, and then only on the payment of money. This was not all: they also assigned me four and twenty gold pieces for each year of service. Likewise . . . I was appointed one of the *Souggestiones*,[1] of whom there is this to be said, that all of them were always . . . distinguished by an excellent education, and took pains to become more proficient in the Latin language, which they needed for their work. A case of appeal having arisen, and being referred to the council (*synklētos*) for revision, the principal officer arranged that the *suggestio*, as it is called (in Greek we call it *didascalia*, or interpretation) should be so conducted, in the hearing before the council, as to astonish the quaestor of the council [and the rest of those present]. With the help of God, and with the work made easy for me by the encouragement which I received, I not only fulfilled the duties I have mentioned in the *Scrinium*,[2] but also I acted as chief secretary (*epesēcrēteuon*) to its clerks, besides helping other clerks in the chamber (*temenos*) of justice which is called the *Secretum*. I gained no small reputation from what I did, and I enjoyed no little encouragement in doing it; and in this way I was carried forward, as if I were on wings, into the ranks of those who are called *a secretis* [i.e. the secretariat] of the court (*aulē*).

c. 28. [The writer then describes how Zoticus gave him his daughter in marriage with a large dowry.] 'Hoping now that things would go much better with me as time went on, I abstained from my [? other] work in the court, and gave up all my life

[1] The office may be that of a counsellor and interpreter, who would help a Greek-speaking court in the administration of a system of law expressed, as it was at this time, in Latin.

[2] In the time of Justinian there were several *scrinia* or registries, one of which was the *scrinium memoriae*, while others dealt with *epistulae* and *libelli*. It is not clear which of the *scrinia* is here in question—unless it be (as the mention of *memorialioi* above suggests) the *scrinium memoriae*.

to my regular duties. When my public duties had been performed in all the respects that I have mentioned, and fortune no longer frowned on study, as it had previously done, I began to dislike the service, and devoted myself entirely to books. The emperor [Justinian], knowing my passion for scholarship, began by asking me to deliver an encomium upon him, in the presence (as it happened) of an audience which included eminent persons from the greater Rome [on the Tiber], who have always a regard, even in their time of troubles, for any devotion to study; and after that he also commanded me to write a history of the war with Persia which he had waged with success. . . .

c. 29. 'Writing a rescript to the eparch in my favour, the emperor used these words: "We are conscious that the most learned John of Lydia possesses a wide culture in the field of study, accuracy in grammar, grace in poetry, and a general scope of learning; and we know that, anxious to give greater lustre to the Latin language by his efforts, though without ceasing to fulfil duly the duties of his service in the courts of your excellency, he has chosen to add to those duties the labour of a study of books and to devote himself entirely to learning. Judging it, therefore, unworthy of our age that a man who has attained such a height of excellence should be left without recognition, we command your excellency to give him from the public funds such and such payment." . . . The eparch who was then charged with the administration of the city obeyed these instructions, and gave me a place assigned to the use of teachers in the Capitoline Court; and I taught there, while still remaining in the service, and I was made to feel proud of myself.

c. 30. 'But as time glided imperceptibly by, I passed out of the various stages and duties of my service, without having suffered any set-back, and I reached the close of my career. As far as money went, I had now come to an end, being no longer in the service; but I had to my credit honour and the respect of my superiors, and —what was agreeable to me above everything else—I lived a life of leisure. All-wise Justice, comforting me in just ways, brought me, as I have said, the respect of my fellows in the service, and proved me not unworthy of honour from the authorities. This is

plain from the testimonial given to me when I doffed my girdle of office and went to present myself in the court. I took my place on the dais of the eparch, following the traditional custom of offering thanks to my superiors on relinquishing office; and the president —Hephaestus... reputed to be a descendant of the Hephaestus who was the first king of Egypt according to Diodorus Siculus—stood up to honour me, greeted me graciously, embraced me, and offering me his congratulations gave me with his own hands an order on the treasury [*annonae*]. After giving me much praise he read aloud in the presence of the whole assembly the following address of congratulation: "The most learned John—and he rejoices in this appellation more than in the marks of recognition that have come to him through the honours he has received—having surpassed himself in those finest of all accomplishments, culture and learning (*paideia kai logoi*), has shown himself of such quality as not only to be admired himself, but also to be the cause of many others being admired who are the products of his teaching. Thinking it a little thing—for so it would appear—that he should be adorned only with the graces of learning (yet what could possibly be greater?), he has also concerned himself with affairs of State. In the service of our courts he has preserved an unbroken harmony at all times, following his own example . . . and making his merits all the greater by enriching them with learning as well as service to the State. Having in all these respects earned a good reputation, and having come to an end of the stages and duties [of his service] in our courts of law, he will follow in the steps of the great emperor, and will thereby come to enjoy even greater gifts. For in addition to his other qualities the emperor is also a lover of learning (*philologos*), time having given this blessing to us in our days, that the majesty of our ruler should bring all the rest of the State to a still greater brilliance." Having received this honour from the court, which was worth any amount of money, I went back into the hall, having served in all forty years and four months (*circa* 510–50). I had received the recognition which it is customary that the empire should give to those who serve their time; and I returned to my books.'[1]

[1] From Johannes Lydus, *De Magistratibus*, iii, cc. 26–30, ed. R. Wuensch.

PART III

THE PERIOD FROM THE DEATH OF HERACLIUS TO THE ACCESSION OF BASIL I

641–867[1]

§ 1. TWO PASSAGES ON KINGSHIP FROM THE ROMANCE *BARLAAM AND JOSAPHAT*

Barlaam and Josaphat is a Christian version of the life of Buddha, or (as its title runs in the Greek) 'a history which is good for the soul . . . transferred from the country of the Indians to the holy city by John the Monk, a worthy and virtuous man of the monastery of St. Saba', in Palestine. Some scholars have identified 'John the Monk' with John of Damascus, a theologian who lived in the first half of the eighth century and died in the monastery of St. Saba (see below, p. 86): others date the work earlier (in the first half of the seventh century) and leave 'John the Monk' unidentified. Whoever its author may have been, this Christian version of the life of Buddha had a lasting and widespread vogue: it appeared in various versions and in many languages (Latin, French, German, Arabic, and Hebrew) from the seventh and eighth centuries down to the sixteenth. The romance contains two passages on kingship which are closely akin to the 'Exposition' of Agapetus. They may have been borrowed from it, or the author of the romance may have drawn on a source on which Agapetus had also drawn. The former view seems the more likely: the work of the deacon Agapetus—in virtue alike of its good style, its tone, and its epigrammatic brevity—must have been well known and may have served as a textbook; and as such it may well have been used by 'John the Monk' a century or so after its composition.

[1] This period, though it is comparable in length with the other three periods, has left a much smaller legacy of literature in the field of social and political thought; and the examples and illustrations of that legacy given here are correspondingly brief and slight. For an explanation of the paucity of the surviving literature of the period the reader is referred to the Introduction, p. 46.

The two passages on kingship which follow are translated from J. Fr. Boissonade's edition in *Anecdota Graeca*, iv (Paris, 1832), pp. 308–9 and 331–5.

1. *The Government of Josaphat*[1] *during his reign*

'Certainly the king was a good example to all men, and he fired and inspired many to the same temper as himself. That is the nature of authority: its subjects are always assimilated to it; they tend to love the same objects, and to follow the same practices, as those in which they see their ruler taking pleasure.[2] Hence, with the aid of God, piety increased and flourished among the subjects of the king. He was wholly devoted to the commandments and love of Christ: he was a steward of the word of grace, and the steersman of many souls who brought them to their anchor in the harbour of God (cf. Agapetus, cap. 2 and cap. 52). For he knew that it was the business of a king, above all things, to teach men to fear God and uphold justice; and this he did, schooling himself to be master and king over his passions and, like a good steersman, keeping a firm hold on the rudder of enforcement of the law among his subjects (cf. Agapetus, cap. 2). This is the essence of true kingship, to be king and master over all pleasures; and that the king was. He cherished no pride at all in the nobility of his ancestors and the royal pomp that surrounded him: he knew that all of us alike have a first ancestor made of clay (cf. Agapetus, cap. 4), and that, whether rich or poor, we are all made of the same mixture: he always steeped his mind in the depths of humility; and remembering the bliss of the world to come he counted himself a stranger in this world, and knew that the life of the world to come was what he would enjoy after his sojourning here.'

2. *Josaphat, resigning his crown, commends Barach as his successor to the people, and gives him counsel and advice*

'Lo!, my brother, I give thee my injunction, even as the Apostle St. Paul once testified, saying, "Take heed unto yourself, and to

[1] Josaphat is Buddha in the original.

[2] This is the old doctrine of *mimēsis* or imitation of the ruler, common in writings on kingship from A.D. 100 onwards.

all the flock, in the which the Holy Ghost hath made you king to feed the people of the Lord which he hath purchased with his own blood".[1] And as, even before me, you knew God and served Him with a pure conscience, so do you now show a still greater zeal to please Him. For inasmuch as you have been deemed worthy of great power from God, by so much are you his debtor for a still greater return (cf. Agapetus, cap. 5). Wherefore repay to your Benefactor the debt of gratitude due, keeping His holy commandments and turning away from every road that leads to destruction. For just as, on a voyage, the error of a sailor does little damage to the passengers, but when the steersman commits an error it causes the destruction of the whole ship; so in the affairs of kings, when one of their subjects does wrong, he does not injure the community so much as he injures himself, but when the king himself does wrong, he inflicts injury on the whole State (cf. Agapetus, cap. 10, which is here quoted *verbatim*).

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'Consider the revolving wheel of human affairs, as it carries and spins them round, now in one way and now in another; and in all their sudden changes keep the pious thoughts of your heart unchanged (cf. Agapetus, cap. 33). To change with the changes of affairs is the mark of an unstable mind. Be steadfast, rooted and grounded wholly in what is good.

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'What are the commandments which you ought to observe above all others? "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy", and "Be ye merciful, as your father which is in heaven is merciful". This is the commandment which those who bear the highest authority are required to obey above all others. He who is possessed of great authority ought indeed to imitate, so far as he can, the giver of that authority; and herein he will imitate God most, if he holds that there is nothing more precious than mercy (cf. Agapetus, cap. 37). And so with subjects also: there is nothing that moves them so much to feel goodwill [to their ruler] as does grace of goodwill bestowed on the needy; for obedience which

[1] Acts of the Apostles, xx. 28, with some variations.

arises from fear is only a simulated adulation, which cheats with the fictitious name of honour those who pay heed thereto (cf. Agapetus, cap. 19, which is here again quoted *verbatim*). A people which is subject against its will revolts when it finds an opportunity; but a people which is attached to its sovereign by the bonds of goodwill keeps firm and true in its obedience to its ruler (cf. Agapetus, cap. 35, again quoted *verbatim*). Wherefore be ready of access to those who are in need, and open your ears to the poor, that you may find the hearing of God open to you. For such as we are to our fellow servants, such shall we find our master to us: we shall be heard even as we hear, and we shall be seen even as we see by the divine and all-seeing eyes. Let us therefore be forward in giving mercy for mercy, that we may ourselves receive like for like.'

§ 2. FROM THE PREFACE TO THE *ECLOGA* OF LEO III (*circa* 726)

The *Ecloga* (or 'Selection') is a brief code of forty titles issued in Greek by the emperor Leo the Isaurian. Its nature is indicated in its title: it is 'a selection of laws, made in an abridgement, by Leo and Constantine [the son and successor of Leo], our wise and pious emperors, from the Institutes, Digest, Code, and Novellae of the great Justinian; . . . a revision issued with a view to greater humanity (*eis to philanthrōpoteron*)'. Two paragraphs are here translated from the preface: the first is notable for the suggestion that the words addressed to St. Peter ('Feed my lambs') may be applied to the emperor; the second gives an account of the method by which the revised abridgement of the laws was compiled. On the general significance of the *Ecloga* see the Introduction, above, p. 31.

'Since God has put in our hands the imperial authority, according to His good pleasure, and given us therein an acknowledgement of the love which we cherish towards Him in reverence—bidding us after the manner of Peter, the head and chief of the Apostles, to feed His most faithful flock—we believe that there is nothing higher or greater that we can do in return than to govern

in judgement and justice those who are committed by Him to our care, to the end that the bonds of all manner of injustice may be loosened, the oppression of covenants imposed by force may be set at naught, and the assaults of wrongdoers may be repelled, and that thus we may be crowned by His almighty hand with victory over our enemies (which is a thing more precious and honourable than the diadem we wear) and thus there may be peace in our palace and stability in the state of our realm (*politeuma*).

'Wherefore—busied as we are with such cares; bending our mind in vigilance to the discovery of whatsoever is pleasing to God and good for the common weal; honouring justice above all things earthly, since she is the guardian of things heavenly, and sharper than any sword to repel all adversaries by virtue of the power of Him who is reverenced in her; knowing that the laws set forth by those who were emperors before us have been recorded in many volumes, and being assured that the meaning and intention of these laws is difficult of understanding for some, and beyond all understanding for others, especially those who do not live in our God-guarded and imperial city—we have called together our most excellent *patricii*, our most excellent *quaestor*, our most excellent *hypatoi*, and others who fear God, and we have commanded that all the volumes they use should be assembled in our presence: we have examined them all with a careful inspection; and thereupon (making use both of what is well expressed in the aforesaid volumes and of what we ourselves have newly ordained on a number of issues and covenants) we have thought it fitting that the judgements to be rendered and the penalties proper to offences should be set out more evidently and simply in this volume; our object being that there should be a clear understanding of the force of such holy laws, that matters should be settled in wisdom of judgement, that there should be a just punishment of wrongdoers, and that there should be reform and correction of those who are disposed to wrongdoing.'[1]

[1] From the text in *Collectio Librorum Juris Graeco-Romani Ineditorum*, ed. K. E. Zachariae von Lingenthal, pp. 10–11.

§ 3. JOHN OF DAMASCUS ON CHURCH AND STATE

John of Damascus was born in that city, about the year 700, and belonged to the Mansur family, which held an hereditary office under the Arab government. After holding the family office for a time, he came under the influence and instruction of a Sicilian monk; and some time before the year 736 he entered the monastery of St. Saba (in Palestine). Here he lived and wrote till his death, about the year 754. The Greek Church of his day was vexed by the controversy about the use of images, which broke out during the reign of Leo the Isaurian (717–41); and sometime between 726 and 737 he wrote a treatise, in three parts or 'speeches', against the Iconoclasts. He also wrote a great work (again in three parts) entitled 'The Fountain of Knowledge' (*pēgē gnōseōs*), which contains a statement of the principles of philosophy, a refutation of heresies, and a statement of the principles of dogmatic theology. This work not only became a leading authority for the Greek Church of the Middle Ages; it also became known to the West in the course of the twelfth century, and exerted some influence on the development of Western theology (see above, p. 14). John was a poet as well as a philosopher and a controversialist: he wrote hymns and 'canons' (long religious poems composed of eight or nine 'odes', with each 'ode' containing a number of stanzas) which were greatly renowned in the Eastern Church.[1]

The following passages are translated from the second of his speeches against the Iconoclasts (printed in Migne's *Patrologia Graeco-Latina*, xciv).

(*a*) 'It appertains not to kings to make laws for the Church. Kings have not preached the word to you, but apostles and prophets, pastors and doctors. Political welfare is the concern of kings: the ecclesiastical system is a matter for pastors and doctors; and this,[2] brethren, is an act of brigandage' (op. cit., col. 1295). The phrase used by the writer recalls the saying of St. Augustine, *Remota justitia quid sunt regna nisi magna latrocinia.*

[1] Some stanzas from two of the 'odes' in a canon 'On the Birth of Christ' are printed in the *Oxford Book of Medieval and Modern Greek Poetry*, pp. 27–28.

[2] The writer is referring to the action of the Iconoclasts.

(*b*) The writer quotes the saying of Jesus, 'Render . . . unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's'. He then proceeds to comment on the saying. 'We are obedient to you, O King, in the things that concern our daily life—the tributes, taxes, and offerings whereby our belongings are entrusted to you; but in matters of ecclesiastical government we have our pastors, who have preached the word to us and shaped the law of the Church. We do not alter the everlasting bounds which our fathers fixed for us: we keep the traditions as we have received them. If we begin to demolish the structure of the Church, even in a little thing, the whole of the edifice will soon fall to the ground' (op. cit., col. 1297).

(*c*) 'The Manichaeans wrote the gospel according to Thomas:[1] do you, then, write one according to Leo? I do not acknowledge an emperor who makes the priesthood a prize in the manner of a tyrant. Kings have not been given the power to bind and loose. I know of the emperor Valens, a Christian in name, who persecuted the true faith. . . . But I cannot be persuaded that the Church is governed by imperial edicts: it is governed by the traditions of the fathers, written and unwritten. Just as the Gospel was preached in all the world without any writing, so, too, in all the world the tradition has been handed down to us, without any writing, that we should represent the incarnate God and the Saints by means of images, and that we should pray with our faces to the East' (op. cit., col. 1302).

§ 4. THEODORE OF STUDION ON CHURCH AND STATE

Theodore of Studion was the abbot of a famous monastery in Constantinople, from 798 till his death in 826. He made his monastery a centre of monastic reform, the home of a monastic school, and a place of learning and the copying of manuscripts. At once a monastic reformer and an ecclesiastical statesman, he may almost be called the St. Bernard of the Orthodox Church of the East. As a monk and monastic reformer he wrote two collec-

[1] On the gospel of Thomas and its connexion with the Manichaeans see M. R. James, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, pp. 14–16.

tions of sermons, the Great and the Small Catechism; he was also the poet of monasticism, and the author both of 'epigrams' on religious subjects and of church hymns and 'canons'. As an ecclesiastical statesman he sought to vindicate the sanctity of the canon law of marriage against the emperor himself, and he vigorously defended the cause of the spiritual independence of the Church during the second phase of the inconoclastic controversy. He was thrice banished from Constantinople—twice on the issue of imperial marriages, and once for his fearless advocacy of the use of images. His writings on these issues are to be found in the three books of his 'Refutations' (*logoi antirrhētikoi*) and in his numerous Epistles. He is in many ways a notable figure, alike in the history of monasticism, in the promotion of education and sound learning, in the vindication of religious liberty, and in the cause of close and friendly relations between the Latin Church of the West and the Greek Church of the East. The following passage, from one of his Epistles, illustrates the nature of his conception of religious liberty:

'The issue does not turn on secular and carnal affairs, in which the emperor has the power of judgement and [jurisdiction in] the secular court: it is an issue that concerns divine and heavenly doctrines, and this is a thing entrusted only to those to whom the Word of God has Himself spoken, saying, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven". Who are they who are thus empowered? The Apostles and their successors. Who are their successors? They are the holder of the first see (*protothronos*) in Rome: the holder of the second in Constantinople: the holders of the sees of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem. This is the pentarchic authority of the Church; these are they who are the court of judgement in the matter of divine doctrines. To kings and rulers it appertains [only] to lend their aid, to join in attesting doctrines, and to reconcile differences in respect of secular affairs. Nothing else has ever been given them by God, in the matter of divine doctrines; nothing else, should it ever come to pass, will endure.'[1]

[1] From Migne, *Patrologia Graeco-Latina*, xcix, col. 1417 B–C.

PART IV

THE PERIOD FROM THE ACCESSION OF BASIL I TO THE LATIN CONQUEST OF CONSTANTINOPLE

867–1204

§ 1. PASSAGES FROM LEGAL DOCUMENTS AND TREATISES, SECULAR AND ECCLESIASTICAL

A. *Secular legal documents and treatises*

(*a*) *Passages from the* Epanagōgē (circa 880)[1]

The document from which the following passages are translated is an Introduction (in Greek *Epanagōgē*) to 'a revision of the ancient laws' made in the reign of Basil I and his son and successor Leo VI, called the Wise or Philosopher (see above, p. 31). It thus belongs to the beginnings of the Macedonian dynasty, and to the days of the patriarch, statesman, and scholar Photius, who was probably responsible for the definition of the powers of the emperor and the patriarch which comes in its early titles or chapters.

Titulus II. *On the Emperor, and what he is.* § 1. 'The Emperor (*Basileus*) is a legal authority, a blessing common to all his subjects, who neither punishes in antipathy nor rewards in partiality, but behaves like an umpire making awards in a game.

§ 2. 'The aim of the Emperor is to guard and secure by his ability the powers which he already possesses; to recover by sleepless care those that are lost; and to acquire by wisdom and by just ways and habits those that are not [as yet] in his hands.

§ 3. 'The end set before the Emperor is to confer benefits: this is why he is called a benefactor; and when he is weary of confer-

[1] From the text of the *Epanagōgē* printed in Zachariae von Lingenthal's *Jus Graeco-Romanum*, iv. 181–4. (It is also printed in his *Collectio Librorum Juris Graeco-Romane Ineditorum*, 1852, pp. 65–68.)

ring benefits, he appears, in the words of the ancients, to falsify the royal stamp and character [i.e. he is guilty of the offence of *paracharaxis*, which was charged against Diogenes the Cynic].

§ 4. 'The Emperor is presumed to enforce and maintain, first and foremost all that is set out in the divine scriptures; then the doctrines laid down by the seven holy [general] Councils; and further, and in addition, the received Romaic laws [i.e. the Byzantine law as codified by Basil I and Leo VI].

§ 5. 'The Emperor ought to be most notable in orthodoxy and piety, and to be famous for holy zeal, both in the matter of the doctrines laid down about the Trinity, and in the matter of the views most clearly and surely defined about the nature of its being [in the Greek *oikonomia*] in virtue of the nature of the being of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the flesh.[1] This [he will do] by observing the [doctrine of the] identity of being [*homoousion*] in the three substances of the Godhead, indivisible and illimitable, and the union of the two natures substantially in the one Christ: likewise [by observing the doctrine of] the unconfounded, and yet indivisible, perfect God and perfect man in the same person [of the one Christ], and the consequences thereof—as that He is without passion and yet subject to passion, incorruptible and yet corruptible, impalpable and yet palpable, above circumscription and yet circumscribed; and that He has duality of wills and operations without contradiction [of the two], and that He cannot be depicted [or figured] and yet is.

§ 6. 'The Emperor must interpret the laws laid down by the men of old; and he must in like manner [or 'on their analogy'] decide the issues on which there is no law.

§ 7. 'In his interpretation of the laws he must pay attention to the custom of the State [in the Greek *polis*]. What is proposed contrary to the canons [of the Church] is not admitted as a pattern [to be followed].

[1] The Eastern Church, inheriting the metaphysical genius of ancient Greece, was always concerned with the problem of 'being' (while the Roman Church was rather concerned with problems of 'doing')—with the problem of the 'being' of the Trinity and the 'substances' of its three Persons (whether 'the same' or 'similar'), and again with the problem of the 'being' of the Son (whether He had two 'natures' or 'wills', and if so what was their relation, or had one 'nature' and one 'will', as the Monophysites and Monothelites maintained).

§ 8. 'The Emperor must interpret the laws benevolently. For in cases of doubt we allow a generous [in Greek *philokalos*] interpretation.

§ 9. 'He must not alter rules which have a clear interpretation.

§ 10. 'As concerns matters on which there is no law in writing, the Emperor must pay heed to habit and custom; and if this too fails, he must follow precedents analogous to the case in question.

§ 11. 'As the enunciation of law is either written or unwritten, so its abrogation is the result either of a written rule or of an unwritten, that is to say of disuse.

§ 12. 'We employ the custom of a state [*polis*] or province [in the Greek *eparchia*] when it has been confirmed after debate in court. Rules which have been approved by lasting custom, and maintained for a number of years, have no less force than written rules.

§ 13. 'It is our will that wrong decisions should not be confirmed even by long custom.

Titulus III. *On the patriarch, and what he is.* § 1. 'The Patriarch is a living and animate image of Christ by deeds and words typifying the truth.

§ 2. 'The aim of the Patriarch is, first, to guard those whom he has received from God, in piety and soberness of life; [next] to turn to orthodoxy and the unity of the Church, so far as he can, all heretics (the name of heretics against the laws and canons is applied to those who are not in communion with the Church catholic); and, finally, through the awe he inspires by his shining and most manifest and admirable action, to make those who are unbelievers imitators of the faith.

§ 3. 'The end set before the Patriarch is the salvation of the souls entrusted to him, and that they should live for Christ and be crucified to the world.

§ 4. 'The attributes of the Patriarch are that he should be a teacher; that he should behave equally and indifferently to all men, both high and low; that he should be merciful in justice, but a reprover of unbelievers; and that he should lift up his voice on

behalf of the truth and the vindication of the doctrines [of the Church] before kings, and not be ashamed.

§ 5. 'The Patriarch alone must interpret the canons passed by the men of old and the decrees enacted by the holy councils.

§ 6. 'The Patriarch must handle and decide [matters arising from] what has been done and arranged, in particular and in general, by the early fathers in councils [of the whole Church] and in [those of its] provinces.

§ 7. 'The older canons are included in, and along with, the later: likewise the older acts and dispositions are included and are valid along with the later, in respect of the like persons and things.

§ 8. 'As the constitution [in Greek *politeia*] consists, like man, of parts and members, the greatest and the most necessary parts are the Emperor and the Patriarch. Wherefore the peace and felicity of subjects, in body and soul, is [i.e. depends on] the agreement and concord of the kingship and the priesthood in all things.

§ 9. 'The [ecclesiastical] throne of Constantinople, honoured with kingship [over other ecclesiastical thrones?], was by the votes of councils designated the first and foremost;[1] wherefore the divine laws following thereon ordain that the issues coming before the other thrones should be referred to the judgement and decision of that throne.

§ 10. 'The supervision and care of all metropolitanates and bishoprics, and of all monasteries and churches, and further the right of judgement and of condemnation and acquittal, is reserved for their own patriarch. The president [in Greek *proedros*] of [the Church in] Constantinople has the right to grant the setting up of the cross [in the consecration of churches] within the sphere of other thrones, where there is no previous consecration of a shrine. Not but that he may also, when disputes arise in the spheres of other thrones, consider and decide such disputes, and bring the issues to an end.

§ 11. 'The supervision of all spiritual matters is reserved [in all churches] for the patriarch, but it is also remitted to others to

[1] The second oecumenical council (that of Constantinople in 381) enacted that the bishop of Constantinople should rank next to the bishop of Rome; and the fourth council (that of Chalcedon in 451) declared that Constantinople 'should be magnified as Rome is in ecclesiatical matters and rank next after her'.

whom he himself determines that it should be remitted. Likewise he himself, and he only—or those whom he may appoint—is also arbitrator and judge in matters of repentance and turning away from sins and heresies. In metropolitanates and bishoprics the same rule and authority is observed in regard to metropolitans and bishops.[1]

Titulus VIII. *On the election of bishops*

§ 3. 'We ordain that, when a bishop is to be elected, there should be a meeting of the clergy and the principal men of the city, at which votes shall be cast among three persons; and each elector shall certify that he has not given his vote for any gift or promise, or through friendship or favour or any other reason of partiality, but in the knowledge that the persons concerned are of the orthodox and catholic faith, of good life, over the age of thirty, and not married.[2] . . . Let the best of the three persons for whom votes are cast be elected by the choice and judgement of the electors; and let him furnish a letter under his own signature concerning his orthodox faith.[3] . . . The person elected shall also certify, under his own hand, that he has made no gift or promise, either directly or through another, and that he will not hereafter make any gift, either to a person who voted for him, or to any of the persons who cast votes, or to any other person whatsoever, in respect of his election.

§ 4. 'We ordain that if the persons voting should think that any layman is worthy of the aforesaid election to the office of bishop, they should consider him along with the other three who are clerks or monks; provided, notwithstanding, that the layman thus considered for the office be not [at once] elected bishop, but shall first, in not less than three months from the time of the election,

[1] The title patriarch was given in the Eastern Church to the four patriarchs of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem; the patriarch of Constantinople being the 'oecumenical' patriarch. (The fifth patriarch of the 'pentarchy' was the Pope as the head of the Latin Church of the West.) Next to the patriarchs came the metropolitans (the heads of a mother-church which included other episcopally governed daughter churches); and next to them the bishops.

[2] In the Orthodox Church bishops and the higher clergy (unlike the village priests) must be celibate.

[3] The Systatic Letter, or commendatory epistle, regularly dispatched by a new bishop to all other sees and preserved in their archives.

be admitted as a member of the clergy,[1] and shall accordingly be elected bishop after having received instruction in the holy canons and the sacred liturgy of the church.

Titulus IX. *On what is proper to bishops and other clergy*

§ 1. 'We do not permit . . . bishops or monks to act, under any rule of law, as guardians or curators of any person whatsoever.

§ 2. 'We permit priests and deacons and sub-deacons who are called to the office of guardian or curator on the ground of kinship (but on that ground only) to undertake the duty of such office.

§ 3. 'We do not permit a bishop, or a steward (*oikonomos*), or any other clerk of any degree, or a monk, to be a receiver or demander of taxes, or a farmer of taxes, or a curator of the goods and house of another person, or a summoner in a court, or a surety.'

Note. See on these three rules the passage of the Commentaries of Theodore Balsamon translated below, p. 105.

§ 13. 'Greeks (*Hellēnes*, i.e. pagans) and Jews and heretics do not serve in the army or the government, but are utterly disfranchised.

§ 14. 'Those who are ordained as members of the clergy, or have taken vows in a monastery, and subsequently abandon their proper status (*taxis*) and transform themselves into laymen, do not serve in the army or the government, but are equally disfranchised with the persons aforesaid.

§ 16. 'Monasteries and churches, and more especially metropolitanates and bishoprics, are not subject to any *corvée* or form of service, whether of a private or a public order. They are exempt from them all for [the service of] God, even as the tribe of Levi was free from all obligation under the Mosaic law. But if any unavoidable emergency should occur, involving the common weal, and demanding that they too should undertake some form of service in the interest of their own safety, they shall fulfil such obligation, wholly [and solely] through the action of the local bishops, and not through the action of laymen.

[1] Bishops and the higher clergy took vows, and were in that sense 'regulars' in distinction from the 'secular' priests of parishes.

Titulus XI. *On status* (taxis) *and courts of law*

§ 1. 'We ordain that the courts of law should be recognized as based on the principle of status, and should be organized on that basis; for as there is nothing whatever, in the realm of visible things belonging to this world, which is without quantity and quality, so, too, there is no court of law which is without these two attributes. . . . When status and justice are in harmony, and truth is attained by the union of both, justice is said to be rendered justly; but justice that is dissociated from status cannot be said to be rendered justly, even if it chances to attain truth.

§ 3. 'There are two species of courts, the one proceeding by [secular] laws only, and the other by [ecclesiastical] canons: there is also a third species, which combines and applies what is drawn both from laws and from canons.

§ 5. 'The court of the *autocratōr* and *basileus* is not subject to appeal, nor are its findings revised by any other court: it is always reviewed by itself, even as Moses, who saw God face to face, remitted the power of reviewing decisions [given under the law] to the law [itself].

§ 6. 'The court of the patriarch is not subject to appeal, nor are its findings reviewed by any other court, since it is itself the foundation and source (*archē*) of ecclesiastical courts. All ecclesiastical courts are derived from it, and they all return to and end in it; but it is not derived from any other, nor does it return to and end in any other. . . . It is [only] reviewed spiritually, and by itself.

§ 11. 'We do not permit any man belonging to the ranks of the clergy—be he bishop or priest or deacon, or any person whatsoever who is on the clerical register—to appear before a lay court, either with or against his will. If any man should bring an ecclesiastic before a lay court against his will, he shall receive the proper correction at the hands of our clemency; if a clerk voluntarily appears before a lay court, or if of his own initiative he prefers the decision of such a court to [that of] an ecclesiastical tribunal, he is condemned by the holy canons, even if he thinks that he has received justice from the court. How can a man who bases the foundation of his case on contempt of the divine commandments deserve to get what he seeks?

§ 12. 'No official has the power to compel bishops to attend a court and to give evidence. The judge must send to the bishop some of the persons in his service, in order that the bishop may testify what he knows before God, as is proper in the case of clergy.'

Note on the appointment of a patriarch in the year 970.

John Tzimisces, aided by the empress Theophano, whose lover he was, had brought about in 969 the assassination of the emperor Nicephorus Phocas, and had proposed, on ascending the throne, to marry his widow. The patriarch Polyeuktes not only prevented the marriage: he also compelled Tzimisces to do penance, to banish Theophano from the palace, and to punish the murderers of her husband, before he could enter the Church of St. Sophia or receive the imperial crown. Tzimisces was also forced to revoke the law which his predecessor had passed to prevent any new endowment of monasteries (see below, p. 117). In the hour of his victory the patriarch died, and a new patriarch had to be appointed. Leo Diaconus, in his account of the years 959–75, narrates the history of the appointment. The general passage of events, and the speech attributed to Tzimisces by the historian, attest the power which a patriarch could exercise in an emergency, even in opposition to an emperor.

'On the death of the patriarch Polyeuktes the emperor John, anxious to find a proper successor, summoned the higher clergy and the senate (*synklētos*), and addressed them in a speech. "I know the one Principle (*archē*), the highest and the first, which has brought the structure of the Universe, both visible and invisible, from a state of Not-being to a state of Being; and in the life and circuit of things here on earth I know two things, the power of the priesthood and that of the kingship, the one entrusted by the Creator with the cure of souls and the other with the government of bodies,[1] to the end that neither part may be lame or halt, but [both] may be preserved sound and whole. Wherefore, since the leader of the Church has paid the debt of nature, it is the function of the eye which nothing escapes to bring to the service of things divine one who is of excellence above all others; one for whom that service was destined even before the ways of men were ordered.

[1] This statement assigns less to the emperor than does the statement of Balsamon two centuries afterwards (see below, p. 106). Tzimisces is here made to limit his power to the government of bodies (cf. the *Novella* of Justinian, supra p. 76): Balsamon represents the emperor as also concerned with the souls of his subjects.

So I myself place on the ecclesiastical chair one of whom I have had sure testimony for a long time past, in order that a man to whom the grace of foresight has been granted by God may not appear to have gone through life unnoticed in a hole and corner; for he has announced to men, as with a divine utterance, many things which were destined to come to pass and which came about in due season." Having thus spoken the emperor brought into the midst of the assembly the anchorite Basil, who from the first had chosen the life of a solitary and had shown to the world the manifold endeavours of his ascetic zeal on the heights of Olympus [a mountain in Bithynia and a home of hermits]. He then bade him ascend the chair of the patriarch; and on the following day Basil received the chrism of holy office and was proclaimed oecumenical patriarch.'[1]

(*b*) *The Book of the Eparch*

The rules laid down by the prefect of Constantinople for the guilds of the city.

The Book of the Eparch is of uncertain date: it may belong to the reign of Leo VI (886–912) which saw the publication of the Code called the *Basilica*, or it may be as late as the reign of Nicephorus Phocas (*circa* 965). The last of its twenty-two chapters is of particular interest, as showing the Byzantine methods of regulating economic life. The chapter is entitled 'Concerning all contractors (*ergolaboi*); or joiners, plasterers, stone-masons, locksmiths, painters, and the like'.

§ 1. 'Craftsmen—joiners, stone-masons, plasterers and the like—who make a contract for any job and receive an advance upon it are not to leave that job and undertake another, unless they have finally completed the job. But if, through lack of materials, or owing to some misconduct of the man who gives the job, there should be a delay (the proper materials not being furnished to the craftsman for the completion of the job), then the craftsman, whatever his craft may be, shall signify the same to the giver of the job, with due notice or attestation; and if *he* is responsible for the delay, appeal should be made to the prefect, and then the craftsman may with his sanction start on another job.

[1] From book VI, c. vii, of the *Historia* of Leo Diaconus, printed in the Bonn edition of Byzantine Historical Authors, pars xi, pp. 101–2.

§ 2. 'Should the aforesaid contractors [i.e. craftsmen], from greed or of malice prepense, leave the job which they have undertaken and take on another job, it shall be lawful for the giver of the job to notify them in the presence of witnesses, reminding them in such notice of the agreement as set out in writing or made by word of mouth; and should they then neglect to fulfil the terms of their employment, he shall appeal to the prefect, and he may then employ another person. Craftsmen who have disregarded [the agreement which they made] shall be brought to reason by flogging, mutilation, and deportation; and there shall also be required at their hands any payment they have received, for return to their employer, and they may be dismissed from the job without payment. But if the employer happens to have no materials, then, on giving him notice, the craftsmen may take on other jobs, so that they may not lose the means of subsistence by being unemployed.

§ 3. 'As concerns any craftsmen who aim at getting a number of jobs, with the result that they are distracted by having them all on their hands; or who now cheat one employer, and now mislead another; or who, as sometimes happens, use glib talk and awkward behaviour as tricks to increase their earnings, on the pretence of their having been fixed under a wrong agreement—this is what ought to be done: if it be really clear, by the finding of the prefect, that the job has grown to greater dimensions [than were contemplated in the agreement], and has turned out to the detriment of the craftsmen concerned (whether the terms had been originally agreed upon in one way and the employer had afterwards determined that the job should be done in another, be it a better or a worse, or whether it were not clear [at the time of the agreement] how the job would work out), then, with the sanction of the prefect, the worth of the work shall be valued by a body of expert craftsmen in either case [that is to say either in the case of a change in the original terms, or in case of its being uncertain how the job would work out]. Herein the rules of the law in regard to buying and selling [*emptio venditio*] shall also be the rules to be followed in regard to agreements of employers and craftsmen. Accordingly if it be found that the work specified in the agreement has been done as agreed, but the payment actually made is less than one-half

of the proper amount, the agreement shall be declared void, and the true cost of the work shall be valued; if the payment actually made is more than half, the payment to be made shall be fixed and paid as stipulated in the agreement; if there be an addition to the job, or a change in it, the cost of the addition or change shall be valued [by the body of expert craftsmen].'

§ 4. [This is a rule to the effect that if a building collapses, otherwise than by act of God, within ten years of its erection, the builder is to make it good at his own cost; but if the building be of clay (bricks?) the term shall be six years instead of ten.][1]

(*c*) *Leo VI, the Wise* (886–911) *on imperial autocracy*

The two *Novellae* translated below are landmarks in the growth of imperial autocracy. They remove even the shadow of that dyarchy of emperor and senate which had been the policy of Augustus.

1. *Novella XLVII, abolishing certain powers of the Senate* (synklētos) *in regard to the appointment of officers*

'In former times, when the constitution (*politeia*) followed a different system, the order of affairs was also differently arranged. All matters were not then supervised by the emperor's providential care (*pronoia*): there were some matters which it was the business of the Senate to consider and decide; and it was by it that persons [i.e. the officers concerned with such matters] were proposed for appointment. Three praetors were thus appointed by it, in the capital city, for the management of affairs, and this arrangement depended on a legal ordinance. Nor was this only the case in the city [Constantinople] which is the seat of government: in other cities, too, persons bearing the same name of senators appointed the *strategoi* (i.e. the municipal heads) who were different from those now understood by that title, and were of higher standing and charged with different duties.[2]

'In former times, when affairs were different, such a law as this

[1] From *Le livre du préfet*, ed. J. Nicole, Geneva, 1893.

[2] The reference, according to the editors of the *Novellae*, is to the *duumviri* formerly appointed by the municipal *curia* or council.

was necessary. Today, however, everything depends on the wisdom of the emperor, and all things are supervised and managed, with the aid of heaven, by the providential care of his wisdom. This law now fulfils no necessary purpose, and we therefore rule that it should be abolished along with the other laws which have been removed from the constitution; for it follows logically, on the same principle by which the requirements of affairs originally led to the issue of laws which are now in desuetude, that a rule which is no longer of any service for the conduct of affairs should be abolished.

2. *Novella LXXVIII, abolishing the power of the Senate to issue senatorial decrees* (senatus consulta)

'What we have already done in respect of other laws which were not required by the position of affairs—by this we mean the removal of superfluous matter from the legal system—we now do in the following respect: we ordain that the law which associates the senate with the process of legislation shall be excluded from its place in the body of the laws. The position of affairs has pronounced sentence of condemnation upon that law, ever since the power of the emperor took their management into his hands; and it is therefore inopportune and idle that a law which is no longer of use should keep its place by the side of laws which serve a purpose.'[1]

(*d*) *Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus on administration and ceremony*

The emperor Constantine VII belonged to the age of the Byzantine encyclopaedists—the age of the Palatine Anthology of Planudes and of the lexicon called Suidas—and the compilations for which he was responsible may entitle him to be called *the* encyclopaedist *par excellence*. He ruled, nominally, from 913 to 959, but exercised power only from 945 onwards. The son of the emperor Leo VI, the 'Philosopher', he was himself a scholar; and being also an invalid, he spent his leisure in amassing and editing a mass of miscellaneous learning. Three compilations resulted from his activity—a treatise on the foreign countries with which Byzantium

[1] From *Les Novelles de Léon VI le Sage*, ed. P. Noailles and A. Dain.

was in contact and on the proper lines of Byzantine foreign policy (the *De Administrando Imperio*); a treatise on the traditional ceremonial and etiquette of the Byzantine Court (the *De Ceremoniis*); and a treatise on the geography and the military organization of the 'themes' or military districts into which the Empire was divided (the *De Thematibus*). It is the first two of these compilations which repay study: the third is mainly an antiquarian work, based on the data and material of earlier years.

The *De Administrando Imperio* is in the form of a 'testament' of policy addressed to the emperor's son. In that respect it is like the 'Heads of advice' which had been addressed by Basil I to his son Leo VI, or the 'Hints on imperial education' afterwards addressed by Manuel II, in the fifteenth century, to his son John VIII. But this likeness is only formal. In substance, as distinct from form, the *De Administrando Imperio* is original and unique. It is not, as the 'testaments' of Basil I and Manuel II both are, a collection of moral maxims and commonplaces in the style and tradition of Agapetus (see above, p. 54): it is rather a set of rules for the proper conduct of foreign policy, especially on the northern frontiers of the Empire, and it is based on the records of Byzantine history and the State papers of the Byzantine archives, which are excerpted and quoted in the course of the argument. There is little in it that comes from the emperor's own pen; but the preface, which is translated below, was his work, and it explains his object.

The *De Ceremoniis* (or *ekthesis tēs basileiou taxeōs*) is a detailed description of the ceremonial and etiquette of the Byzantine Court; and it is based, in the same way as the *De Administrando Imperio*, on official records. Ceremony played a great part in the State system of Byzantium, which made the emperor a hieratic figure moving in a solemn pageantry according to a fixed tradition; and Liutprand, the bishop of Cremona, who visited Constantinople both during the reign of Constantine and later, attests the impression made upon a Western observer by Byzantine ceremonial (see above, pp. 52–53). In the *De Ceremoniis* we learn of the ritual followed at imperial coronations, imperial marriages and funerals, the festivals of the Church, the reception of envoys, and almost every occasion of public life and religious

devotion. The ceremonial which it describes extended its influence beyond the Byzantine Empire. It spread into Western Europe: it affected the life of the Slavonic states in the Balkans and Russia: it survived in the protocol and etiquette of the Ottoman Empire. The preface to the *De Ceremoniis*, which is here translated, contains, as it were, a philosophy of ceremony, and, with it, also a philosophy of the nature of the Empire.

I. *Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus and his testament to his son (De Administrando Imperio)*

Proem (from the text edited by G. Moravcsik, Budapest, 1949)

'Behold, I set out instruction for you, so that, enlightened by the experience and knowledge drawn from it, you shall not go astray from the best of counsels and the common good.

'1. First, I seek to explain what are the nations that can aid or injure the [East] Romans, and in what respects they can do so; which of them can be fought and conquered; how this is to be done in each case, and what other nation should be used for the purpose.

'2. Next, I treat of the inordinate and insatiate temper of these nations, and of the unreasonable gifts and concessions which they demand.

'3. Then I deal likewise with the differences between *other* nations; with their origins, their customs, their ways of life, the lie of the land in which they dwell and its climate; I give a geographical account of each territory and a measurement of distances; in addition, I also treat of the relations into which the Romans and these various other nations have at any time entered.

'4. After that I seek to explain what reforms have been introduced from time to time in our constitution and in the whole of the Roman Empire.'

There are thus three themes in the testament: (1) foreign policy and methods of diplomacy; (2) descriptive and human geography; (3) the constitutional history of the Byzantine Empire. In dealing with the first theme, the writer is mainly concerned with the nations or tribes which lay to the north of the Empire; in dealing

with the second, he is concerned with 'the other nations' of the Eastern Mediterranean, Asia Minor, and the Black Sea.

It may be added that apart from the proem, and some 'sutures' or connecting passages which link different sections together, the only chapter in the work which comes from the emperor's own pen is the chapter (13) which describes the diplomacy that is to be practised, and the excuses that are to be made, if any of the northern peoples demand the gift of imperial decorations, or the gift of Greek fire, or the marriage of a Byzantine princess or prince to the son or daughter of one of their rulers. This chapter is well worth study for the light which it throws on Byzantine ideas of diplomacy (and on the stories the Byzantines could tell about the legacies of advice supposed to have been bequeathed by the emperor Constantine I, 'the great Constantine, the first Christian to be emperor'); but it is expressed at such length, and in so many words, that it cannot be translated here, and the reader is referred to the translation of Professor Jenkins, which is printed parallel with the Greek text, pp. 67–77, in the edition of G. Moravcsik.

II. *The proem to the* De Ceremoniis

'A compilation and work truly worthy of imperial effort.' (From the text edited by A. Vogt, i. 1–2.)

'. . . Many things are apt to disappear in the process of time . . . among them a great and precious thing, the exposition and description of imperial ceremony. To neglect this ceremony, and to sentence it as it were to death, is to be left with a view of the empire devoid of ornament and deprived of beauty. If the body of a man were not gracefully formed, and if its members were casually arranged and inharmoniously disposed, one would say that the result was chaos and disorder. The same is true of the institution of empire (*basilikon politeuma*); if it be not guided and governed by order, it will in no wise differ from vulgar deportment in a private person.

'In order that this result may not happen, and to the end that we may not appear to disgrace the majesty of empire by disorderly behaviour, we have thought it necessary, with laborious effort, to

gather from many quarters all the ceremonies invented by the men of old, or reported by eyewitness, or seen by us and established in our time; and we have resolved that, when they were thus gathered, they should be set out in the present work in a form that could readily be understood. Thus we may illuminate for our successors the tradition of the inherited customs which have come to be neglected and overlooked. Culling, as it were, a bunch of flowers from the meadows, we may present it to the imperial splendour as an incomparable ornament; we may place in the middle of our palace something in the nature of a clear and polished glass, which will show to the eye all that is proper to the office of emperor, as well as all that befits the institution of the senate, and we may thus make it possible for the reins of authority to be managed in order and with decency.

'Now in order that the work we have written may be clear and comprehensible, we have used a popular and simple style, and we have employed the same terms and words which have been applied by long usage and are generally current in each department. Hereby may the imperial power be exercised with due rhythm and order; may the empire thus represent the harmony and the motion of the universe as it comes from its Creator; and may it thus appear to our subjects in a more solemn majesty, and so be the more acceptable to them and the more admirable in their eyes. . . .'

B. *Ecclesiastical legal treatises*

By Theodore Balsamon (Canonist, *circa* 1180)

The development of a system of rules of ecclesiastical law began in the East as early as the reign of Justinian I. The first regular collection of such rules or 'canons' was made about the year 535 by an unknown compiler: a fuller collection, made by John of Antioch (afterwards patriarch of Constantinople from 565 to 577), appeared about 550. These canons, or ecclesiastical rules made by the Church, were afterwards united with the relevant rules of secular law (*nomoi*) in collections called by the name of 'nomocanones'. There were various collections of nomocanones

from the ninth century onwards, particularly in the twelfth century and under the dynasty of the Comneni. Theodore Balsamon, patriarch of Antioch in the last decades of the twelfth century, was a canonist of particular note and great authority. He was a theologian as well as a canonist, and he commented on the prophets of the Old Testament; but his fame rests on his commentaries and other treatises in the sphere of ecclesiastical law. Two passages are here translated, one from his commentaries on the canons of the Council of Carthage (that held in 407–9?), and one from a treatise (or *meletē*) on the privileges of patriarchs.

(*a*) *On the Canons of the Council of Carthage; the rights of the Emperor in and over the Church*

Balsamon is commenting on the rule that the clergy should not undertake secular duties[1] and, in particular, should not act as advocates in the courts.

'The prescriptions laid down by the canons and the synodal edicts [agree] on this. But some hold the view that these prescriptions hold good [only] when a clergyman exercises a public office without being instructed by the emperor to do so; for if by dispensation [literally 'economy'][2] of the emperor any [of the clergy] undertake any such office, they will not be debarred by the aforesaid canons, nor will they be under any disability. Those who take this view go on to say that the emperor is not subject either to the laws or the canons, and therefore he has the power freely and without prejudice to erect a bishopric into a metropolitanate, or to remove it from its present metropolitanate; likewise he may also divide the province of an archbishop (*archiereus*), appoint bishops and metropolitans *de novo*, instruct bishops to conduct services under his licence in other dioceses without the assent of the local bishop, and exercise certain other archiepiscopal rights. [Those who take this view, Balsamon adds, rely on canons of the Council of Chalcedon (451) and the Council in Trullo (691).] My own view is that, by the fourth canon of the

[1] See above, p. 94, for such a rule, as laid down in the *Epanagōgē*.

[2] The word 'economy' was used in a general and comprehensive sense in the Orthodox Church. It implied elasticity, toleration, and a spirit of compromise; see J. C. S. Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, p. 5.

Council of Chalcedon, the emperor *is* . . . empowered to confer the right of exercising secular functions on clergymen and monks in virtue of such dispensation ['economy'] as may seem good to him; for if the local bishop has this power, the emperor has it in a much greater degree, having such a position that he is not bound to follow the canons which prescribe that the election of bishops shall be made by the provincial bishops and not by the [secular] authorities, and thus being able to make promotions to the office of patriarch and bishop without any form of election.'[1]

(*b*) *On the relations of patriarchs and emperors and the privileges of patriarchs.*

Among the various writings of Theodore Balsamon are his *Meditata*, or, as they are called in the Greek title, 'An exercise [*meletē*], or answer, of the most holy patriarch of Antioch, Theodore, concerning the privileges of patriarchs'. In the course of his exercise or answer he reflects on the relations of the patriarch and the emperor and the privileges of patriarchs.

'The service of the emperors [*autocratores*] includes the enlightening and strengthening both of soul and body: the dignity of the patriarchs is limited to the benefit of souls, and to that only (for they have little concern with bodily well-being); likewise the care and the thought given to subjects by the empress is simply directed to the welfare of the body and only to that (for women are devoid of the power of giving spiritual succour). So the lamps of the emperors [i.e. the torches carried before them] are encircled by double golden crowns; those of the patriarchs and the empress by a single coronet. . . . But it may be said: "Be it so: granted that the lamps of the patriarchs are lit with the fire of all the many traditions that command the assent of men's reason: the question still remains why *they* should be girded with power by being made of silver. How did this girding with power come about? Was it not enough that the heads of the churches should be dignified simply by [plain] lamps; and should those who were wanderers in exile and living in poverty be troubled to meet the expense [of silver]?" We say in reply that the most pious

[1] From Migne's *Patrologia Graeco-Latina*, cxxxviii, col. 93.

emperors, and the pentarchy[1] of the most holy patriarchs, can be compared to husbandmen standing in the middle of a threshing floor at harvest-time, winnowing away sin like chaff with the winnowing-fan of baptism, and gathering in goodness like grain; or again they may be compared to compasses which trace accurately the circumference of a circle and illuminate, as it were, the centre with spreading rays of justice; or yet again they may be compared with the masts and sails of a sea-going vessel, guarding and guiding the ship of this world on its way in the strength of imperial prudence and spiritual instruction. Wherefore, if we may compare great things with small, the most god-fearing of the emperors and the more eminent of the holy fathers have laid it down as necessary that the heads of the hierarchy should be attended with such circumstance, and that rich and poor alike should be placed on the same footing [? of contribution to it]: to the end that the faithful, when they see this great and reverend solemnity observed for emperors and patriarchs, and for them only, may offer thanksgiving accordingly, as a sacrifice acceptable to the Lord, Who from the middle of the circle of the world's beauty glorifies the defenders thereof; and on bended knees they may pray to the Lord that all the earth on which the sun shines shall rejoice in the light of imperial victories, and all the goings of this world shall be made to shine by the prayers of the patriarchs. But as for the heretics, who trust in their own strength and boast of their own wealth (for gold and silver are the idols of the nations), may it come to pass that they cease to look at things visible, and learn to think that the works of the copper-smiths are vain and foolish things, and but gauds of worldly glory.'[2]

Note. A comparison of the views of Balsamon with those of Pope Gelasius I.

Balsamon, in this passage, speaks of the service of the emperor as rendered *both* to soul and body, and of the dignity of the patriarch as limited to the cure and benefit of souls. The Latin Church of the West had developed a different view as early as the pontificate of Gelasius I (492–6). Gelasius, in one of his *Tractates* (IV), lays it down that the

[1] The five patriarchs recognized by the Eastern Church; see above, p. 88.

[2] Migne, op. cit., cxxxviii, cols. 1017 and 1020.

separation of the two powers—the temporal and the spiritual—and the limitation of either power *to its own sphere*, was ordained by Christ. Imitating the order of Melchizedek, who was both king and priest, Satan had brought it about, before the coming of Christ, that pagan emperors should also bear the title of chief pontiff (*Pontifex maximus*). 'But at the coming of Him who is at once King and Priest, the king no longer took the name of pontiff, and the pontiff no longer claimed the dignity of king; . . . for Christ, mindful of human frailty, determined by His great and glorious dispensation the order proper to the salvation of His people, and so distinguished the offices of the two powers, each by its proper function and its separate dignity, . . . that Christian emperors should need the help of pontiffs to attain eternal life, and pontiffs should avail themselves of the dispositions made by emperors for the course of things temporal; inasmuch as the action of the spirit differed from the assaults of the flesh, nor should the soldier of God concern himself with secular affairs, or, conversely, should he who was concerned with secular affairs appear to be in charge of the things of God.'

This doctrine of the separation of powers was further developed in a letter of Gelasius addressed to the 'august emperor' in Constantinople (*Epistula* XII). 'There are two things, by which this world is principally ruled—the consecrated authority of pontiffs and the royal power—wherein the burden borne by priests is in so far the heavier, as they have to render account before the judgement-seat of God even for the kings of men. You know, my most gracious son, that although you are set over mankind in dignity you none the less bow your head in devotion to the ministers of the things of God, and you await at their hands the grounds of your salvation; you know that in receiving the heavenly sacraments, and in their proper ordering, you ought, by the order of religion, to be subject rather than sovereign, and you therefore depend in these matters on *their* judgement, while they are not bound to fulfil *your* pleasure. For if the ministers of religion, in so far as the order of public discipline is concerned, and inasmuch as they know that the empire has been conferred on you by gift from above, are themselves obedient to your laws, in order that they may not appear to withstand any rule, even though it be limited to things of this world—how zealous, I ask you, ought *you* to be in obedience to those who are assigned to the task of proclaiming the venerable mysteries [of the faith]? . . . And if it is proper that the hearts of the faithful should be subject to all priests in general who handle aright the things of God,

how much more should assent be given to the bishop of this chair [i.e. the chair of St. Peter] who has been placed by the will of the supreme deity over all priests, and has at all times afterwards been recognized and celebrated by the piety of the Church in general.'

It will be noticed that the position of the emperor, as conceived by Gelasius I, is very different from his position as conceived by Balsamon, who recognizes that he has power, or renders service, in matters spiritual as well as temporal. At the same time it must also be noticed that the doctrine of separation proclaimed by Gelasius is not absolute: if the emperor and the pontiff have separate spheres, and are independent in their spheres, either is subject to the other in the other's sphere—the pontiff to the emperor in the sphere of law and things temporal, and the emperor to the pontiff in the sphere of religion and things spiritual. None the less, Gelasius speaks of the 'heavier burden' of the priestly office, which may be held to imply, or at any rate suggest, a greater *power*; and therein he tilts the balance against the temporal power, as Balsamon afterwards tilted it in the opposite direction.[1]

§ 2. PHOTIUS

Introduction

Photius—twice patriarch of Constantinople, and twice deposed—was born at Constantinople about the year 820, and died in a monastery (and in exile) about 891. He became, in his early years, a scholar and a paragon of Byzantine polymathy, taking all learning to be his province. But he had influential connexions (his brother had married a princess of the imperial house), and in his later years he became immersed in high affairs both of Church and State. He was not a notable theologian; but he was at once a genuine scholar (with some touch of pedantry) and an ecclesi-

[1] It is perhaps unjust, and unfair to Byzantium, to compare and contrast the views of the imperialist Balsamon with those of Pope Gelasius I, not only because they are separated in time by an interval of some seven centuries, but also because the views of Balsamon may be held to be extreme views which go beyond the general opinion of the Greek Church. The theory expressed or implied in Titulus II and Titulus III of the *Epanagōgē* may be argued to be a better basis for comparison with the West than the theory of Balsamon. But the language of Balsamon, when it is compared with that of Gelasius I, naturally suggests a comparison which seems worth making, even if the comparison runs into an antithesis too sharp and too pointed to do justice to the general opinion of the Greek Church, which was hardly as imperialist as was the theory of Balsamon.

astical statesman who could do battle with one of the strongest of Roman popes. His chief title to fame is his scholarship; he was one of the leaders of a Byzantine revival of study which was parallel to the Carolingian renaissance in the West. He made his house a school and a salon where young men regularly met for reading and discussion; and the record of his 'Academy', as it may not unjustly be called, survives in his *Myriobiblion*, which give an account and appreciation (sometimes brief, but sometimes full and exhaustive) of the 280 books which had come under review in the course of the various sessions. (The value of the essays or *causeries* contained in the *Myriobiblion* is that they frequently give some particulars of ancient Greek books—and especially of books on history—which are now lost.) This work of learning, which does not stand alone (he was also the author of a lexicon), was composed before the year 858, when he was made—for the first time—patriarch. But even after he became patriarch, and while he was immersed in affairs, he still collected books and still continued to study. He leaned to Aristotle, as Greek scholars and the Greek Church generally did down to the days of Psellus and the eleventh century, when Plato began to come into his own. But if he knew nearly the whole of Greek literature, he knew no language other than Greek: Latin was beyond his ken.

Photius' first tenure of the office of patriarch was vexed by dissensions, and after some years he was deposed (867). The emperor Basil I then made him the tutor to his son, the future emperor Leo VI (the Wise); and he *may* at this time, and in this connexion, have written the two manuals for Leo (especially the first, which is modelled on the 'Exposition' of Agapetus written three centuries before) that are attributed in their headings to the emperor Basil.[1] In 877, on the death of the patriarch Ignatius (with whom the possession of the see had been disputed during his first tenure), Photius again became patriarch, but he was again deposed, and sent to spend his last years in a monastery (886). Yet

[1] Krumbacher, in his *Byzantinische Litteraturgeschichte* (p. 458), suggests that these manuals were written by some scholar at court; 'perhaps the patriarch Photius'. His suggestion may be supported by the fact that among the works of Photius there is a hymn described as written 'in the person of the emperor Basil' (*Patrologia Graeco-Latina*, cii. 577–80).

in most of the last thirty years of his life he was in the thick of affairs. He contributed, by the decrees of the synods he held, and by the decretals which he himself issued, to the development of the canon law of the Greek Church; and it has been conjectured that he wrote two of the titles (that on the powers of the emperor and that on the powers of the patriarch) in the *Epanagōgē* or introduction to law which was compiled in his time (see above, p. 89). He also wrote a great number of general letters to the statesmen and churchmen of his day: and among them there is a notable letter of advice and exhortation, addressed to a Bulgarian prince and modelled on the orations addressed by Isocrates to a Cypriot ruler.[1] But he is mainly remembered in the record of history for the struggle which he waged with the Papacy and the Church of Rome. It was not until two centuries later (in 1054) that the breach between the Greek and the Latin Church began finally to widen; but it was Photius who, during his two patriarchates, raised the issues and struck the blows which were ultimately to be decisive. He sought generally to vindicate the independence of Constantinople from the primacy claimed by Rome, which was the final and fundamental issue at stake: he sought in particular to defend, in his treatise 'on the mystagogy of the Holy Spirit', the main doctrine of the Greek Church, on the procession of the Holy Ghost, which was the formal and overt issue debated between the two Churches. He fought for himself and for his own ambition as well as for the Greek cause and the independence of 'Hellenism'; but it may be that he fought all the better, and served that cause all the more, because he was also fighting for his own hand. He remains, along with Psellus (of the eleventh century) and Plethon (of the fifteenth), one of the great figures in the history of

[1] One of the many letters of Photius deserves to be quoted for its wit (*Patrologia G.-L.*, cii, col. 872). It is a letter addressed 'to George the deacon and guest-master', who seems to have been a bad cook. 'It is said that the tragic actor Melanthius was so much of a prey to gluttony that he fell into a melancholy because he had not a neck as long as a swan's; for then he could have enjoyed the food that went down his throat, and all the pleasure it gave, for the longest possible time. But if he had had to partake of one of *your* meals, I imagine that he would have found a sovereign remedy for his melancholy; and he might even have prayed that his neck should be shorter still, so that he might not spend so much time in enduring the sort of table you keep and the food which you prepare. . . . What is to be done about it? "Nothing in excess" is the best motto.'

Byzantine thought; and in some ways—not indeed as a scholar, but as a personality and an influence—he was the greatest of the three. Legend recorded of him that he had sold his soul in youth to a Jewish magician,[1] and thus made him a precursor of Faust. He was not a precursor of Faust; but he deserves to be remembered as a precursor, or parallel, in the East, of the great medieval popes of the West who were canonists, theologians, and statesmen all in one.

The personality and the troubled career of Photius are the subjects of a large literature. Not to mention the massive volumes of J. Hergenröther, there is F. Dvornik's recent work on *The Photian Schism* (1948), and E. Amann's chapter on Photius in vol. vi of A. Fliche and V. Martin's *Histoire de l'Église*. The reader is also referred to J. C. S. Runciman's work on *The Eastern Schism* (1955), especially pp. 22–27.

Passages from the letter of Photius to Michael, prince of Bulgaria, (Boris I), on the theme, What is the function of a prince?

(From the text in *Patrologia Graeco-Latina*, cii. 627–96.)

The letter is in the nature of an exhortation to a convert, described by Photius as 'the glory of my labours' and 'the offspring of my spiritual travail'—not that his conversion was directly achieved by the patriarch, but rather because it had been brought about under his guidance and auspices. It accordingly begins, in the early chapters, with a recitation of the creed and an account of the seven general councils recognized by the Greek Church; and it then proceeds (in chapters 28–118) to offer advice—in a traditional style based on the model of Isocrates' orations addressed to Nicocles and the general pattern of 'Mirrors for Princes'—on the moral and political duties of a prince.

Cap. 28. '. . . A ruler must have great goodness and along with his other qualities he must be well-ordered in point of morals: wherefore it is said, "Rule proves the man", and, again, "as gold is tested on whetstones, so is the mind of man on acts of government and the feelings of subjects".'

[1] There is an analogous story about Plethon and his early intercourse with the Jew Elisha at the Sultan's court in Adrianople; see below, p. 196.

Cap. 33. Michael is advised to study history, to talk with the wise, and to gather experience. 'It is your duty to cultivate practical wisdom (*phronēsis*) through all the course of your life. Such wisdom is acquired from the recollection and memory of old achievements; from the conversation and company of men of wisdom who are still living; and from actual experience of the business of life. It is action itself which—gathering strength from imitation, from counsel, and from the handling of affairs—leads to good and useful results if the influences that are above be not adverse.'

Cap. 34. Dress and deportment also matter. 'Do not neglect, as if they were of no account, the things that pertain to the body and its attitudes and movements; for the best sort of order and system in these things has proved itself in experience to be not the least part of wisdom. . . . Wherefore a prince ought to appear orderly and stately in the look of his face, the care of his hair, and the wearing of his clothes [being neither foppish nor slovenly] . . . . An orderly gait becomes a prince: [he must neither mince like a woman nor lurch along in a disorderly and irregular fashion].

Cap. 35. 'A prince must be on his guard against speaking too abruptly. Rapidity of utterance is perhaps not to be despised in debates and disputes, and there it may not be ignoble; but in a public address it is foolish and risky, and in issuing orders, especially on matters of state and the business of the community, it is low and vulgar.

Cap. 42. 'If you surround yourself with a fortress-wall of friendship, you will show yourself implacable to those who offend against other persons or against the community at large; but you will also show sympathy to those who offend against yourself. Thereby law and order will be ensured to the State; your zeal and care for your subjects will be evident; and the humanity of your temper, and your truly royal behaviour, will be proclaimed to the world. Tyrants often overlook offences against the community and wrongs done by citizens to one another; but they visit harshly offences committed against themselves. The policy of a king and of constitutional government is different: it is a policy of tolerating offences against themselves in a humane spirit, and of justly

correcting and pursuing offences against the community and wrongs done by citizens to one another.

Cap. 45. 'Praise and adopt the strictest of laws, and seek to tune your own life to harmony by paying regard to such laws. But do not punish your subjects with inflexible penalties under the rules of these laws: it is better to educate them by gentler and more humane methods; for then you will inspire fear in offenders by your strictness in dealing with yourself, and yet your hand will not be heavy on your subjects.

Cap. 48. 'Some have said that it was the virtue of a prince to make a small state great: I would rather say that it consisted in making a bad state good. It is the presence of opportunities which has often been the cause of a small state being made great; but to make a bad state good is impossible without active good government . . . .

Cap. 57. 'When a prince rules himself, then you may believe that he really rules his subjects; for when they see that the ruler set over them is the master of his passions and pleasures, they will be moved by their own desire and free will to submit themselves [as he, too, does himself]. But if they see him a slave to pleasure and passions, they will think it is intolerable to be the slaves of a slave.

Cap. 62. 'There are many spheres in which a ruler ought to seek to discover the opinion of his subjects, and thus to make them partners in friendship and associates in his government and counsels. The first sphere is that of his own management of his own household; the second is that of co-operation with his wife and children and servants [in the domain of family life]; the third is that of his use of the service of friends, and the fourth that of his connexions with persons who live in his neighbourhood; the last is that of his launching or resisting hostilities [with other States], and, again, of his laying down arms and making peace. These various instances are enough to test the nature of a man, and to show a view of the man himself, stripped of the actor's mask and of that part that he plays on the stage.

Cap. 66. 'Divert disputes among your subjects and turn them against your enemies; make them into struggles in defence of the fatherland. It is a mark and feature of tyrannies that their subjects

should be engaged in civil broils; for tyrants find their safety in a general policy of destruction and division. But the duty and office of a ruler and king is to keep concord among his subjects undisturbed by sedition; for it is in the security of his subjects that the foundation of his authority is established.'

Cap. 95. On Marriage. 'It is a disgrace for one who is a lord and master of men to be overborne by women and to show himself the slave of pleasures. If a man has found a helpmate for life in accordance with the law he does no wrong in living with her. Celibacy is indeed a thing divine, transcending nature, and of higher quality than civic virtue and loyalty. But monogamy is an office of human nature; a means to the reproduction of the species; a way of partnership in a gentle and humane life and a well-ordered state. Polygamy is a thing which is shameful and detestable: it has the mark of the animal world, and it is licentious and unclean.

Cap. 107. 'It is better to leave seditious schemes, which cannot easily be repressed, under a veil and pretence of ignorance, and to hide them as it were in oblivion, rather than to proceed against them with flags and banners flying. Open attack has on occasion made the fire [of dissension] burn more fiercely; it has involved serious dangers; and it has caused grave damage even if it has eventually achieved success. The other policy—that of lulling sedition quietly to sleep—has not only the merit of being free from danger; it has also the advantage of being humane and prudent and of causing no damage.

Cap. 113. 'I would have you believe that the goodwill of your subjects matters more than arms and courage and leadership in war. When goodwill is present and leads the way, these other things are of value, and indeed of great moment, in the handling of all matters; but if goodwill be gone, it is better that these things too should go with it, for they will be brought into play more readily against an unpopular government than they will against an enemy.

Cap. 116. 'The happiness of those who are under authority proclaims the great wisdom and justice of those who exercise it.'

Cap. 118. In this last chapter Photius quotes a passage from the *Republic* of Plato (501 B–C). 'Here', he writes, 'are the policies I

advise: some of them you may erase, and some you may paint in, until you have shown yourself to be in reality an animate and most noble image of a polity such as God loves.'

Note on Nicolas Mysticus, once a pupil of Photius

Two letters addressed by Nicolas Mysticus (patriarch of Constantinople from 901 to 907 and again from 911 to 925) deserve some notice as throwing light on the ideas of Photius. Nicolas had been the pupil of Photius, and he relates and reproduces the ideas of his master on the relations between the Byzantine Empire and the Moslem world. The letters, which are addressed to the emir of Crete, are printed in Migne, op. cit., cxi. 28 and 36–37.

P. 28. 'Two sovereignties—that of the Saracens and that of the Romans [i.e. the East Roman Empire]—surpass all sovereignty on earth, like the two great lights in the firmament. For this one reason, if for no other, they ought to be partners and brethren. We ought not, because we are separated in our ways of life, our customs, and our worship, to be altogether divided; nor ought we to deprive ourselves of communication with one another by correspondence, in default of personal intercourse. This is the way we ought to think and act, even if no other necessity of our affairs compelled us to it.

Pp. 36–37. 'Your wisdom cannot have failed to notice that the greatest among the high priests of God, the famous Photius, my father in the Holy Spirit, was united to the father of your Highness by bonds of friendship; so much so that no other man of his faith and country was so friendly disposed to yours. For being a man of God, and great in [the knowledge of] things divine and human, he knew that even if the dividing wall of worship stood between us, nevertheless the gifts of practical wisdom, sagacity, stability of behaviour, knowledge, and all the other gifts that adorn and exalt human nature by their presence, kindle in those who love what is good a friendship for those who possess the qualities they love.'

A third letter of Nicolas Mysticus, addressed to Symeon of Bulgaria (a successor of the prince Michael to whom Photius addressed his letter on the function of a prince) is also deserving

of notice. In it Nicolas entreats Symeon not to abandon the friendship between the 'Romans' and the Bulgarians. To do so, he argues, would not only be a cause of stumbling to the little ones who believe in Christ, and worthy of the punishment denounced against that offence: it would also be an offence against 'the kingdom (*basileia*) which is above all earthly government, the kingdom which the King of the Universe has established as the one kingdom on earth' (Migne, op. cit., cxi. 64). Nicolas here anticipates the argument and policy of the letter of the patriarch Antonius to the Grand Prince of Russia (see below, p. 194).

§ 3. *PHILOPATRIS*

The dialogue bearing this title, and couched in the manner and style of Lucian, appears from internal allusions to belong to the reign of Nicephorus Phocas (963–9)—the emperor of whose court Luitprand, bishop of Cremona, has left a memorable description. The dialogue deserves some notice for its reflection of the political ideas current in Constantinople towards the end of the tenth century. The emperor had recently (A.D. 964) issued a *Novella* in restriction of the increase of monastic property (he needed men and funds for his wars, and the wealth of the monasteries was a tempting resource); and the result of his action had been that he and his régime had fallen into great disfavour with the monks and their party. This disfavour is reported and ridiculed in a passage of the *Philopatris*, which shows (as other evidence also does) that the Byzantine emperors could not have played unopposed their supposed role of 'Caesar-Popes'. The following extracts give the substance of the *Novella* of Nicephorus Phocas, along with the relevant passages from the argument of the *Philopatris*.

(*a*) *On monasteries, guest-houses, and alms-houses*

A summary of the *Novella* of Nicephorus Phocas as recorded by the canonist Theodore Balsamon (*circa* A.D. 1180)

(From the *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae*, pars xi, pp. 309–10.)

'We ordain that all those who wish to endow monasteries,

guest-houses, and alms-houses shall confine their attention to those which are of ancient foundation, but should not aid them by the gift of lands or farms or by erecting (new) buildings: what has been already done is sufficient. Care should be taken of foundations already in existence: their owners should, for example, sell farms which they own to laymen and use the proceeds of the sale for making repairs, by the erection of shippons and byres for oxen and sheep, by the purchase of slaves, and the like. We command that a prohibition should be enforced against the building of *new* monasteries or guest-houses or alms-houses. Henceforth, therefore [i.e. from the year of the issue of the *Novella*, 964], no man is permitted to convey lands, farms or houses to monasteries, alms-houses or guest-houses, or to metropolitanates or bishoprics; such conveyance is of no use to them in any way whatsoever. But if any of the religious houses already in existence, or any monastery, or metropolitanate, or bishopric, has been so badly managed and supervised as to be left without farms, it is to be allowed to acquire sufficient property [for its needs] with our royal sanction and approval. As concerns the building of cells and 'lauras' (as they are called) in desert places—provided that they are not extended to link up with other possessions and estates, but are enclosed within their own boundaries—we are so far from wishing to prevent those who wish to undertake such building that we rather regard it as a project worthy of commendation.'

The full text of the *Novella* of Nicephorus Phocas is printed in Zachariae von Lingenthal's *Jus Graeco-Romanum*, ii. 292–6.

(*b*) *The views of the writer of* Philopatris *on monks and monasticism* (*C.S.H.B.* xi. 337 ff.)

'An old man with the grim look of a Titan plucked me [Critias, the narrator of the story] by the sleeve and said he had been initiated by them [? the monks] into all the mysteries. So we went through the iron gates and over the floors of bronze, and climbing round and round the many steps of a staircase we came to a house with a roof of gold, like the house of Menelaus that Homer describes [at the beginning of the *Odyssey*]. I gazed at everything,

much as did the young man [Telemachus] from the island [of Ithaca]; but I did not see Helen—I saw only some stooping and pale-faced men [monks?]. When they caught sight of us they rejoiced and came to meet us, asking us: "Did we bring any bad news?" By their looks they seemed as if they hoped for the worst[1] and took pleasure in misfortunes, like the Furies on the stage. Putting their heads close together, they whispered to one another, and then they asked us,

"Who are you, where do you come from, what is your city, and who are your parents?

You should be a good sort of man, by your dress." I replied: "The good are few, as I see by looking around me: my name is Critias, and the city I come from is the same as yours." Then, like men walking on air, they inquired, "How go the affairs of the city [Constantinople] and the Universe?"[2] I said: "All men are rejoicing, and they will rejoice still more." They frowned at this and said: "Not so: the city is in travail with misfortune." [The speaker, Critias, is then made to rally them in jest, and to ask them what is happening in the sky.] They, as if they were never in the wrong, babbled about what they would like to hear: how things were changing, and disorders and troubles would befall the city, and the army would be defeated by the enemy.'

The speaker is then made to rebuke them for their attitude to the lion-hearted heroes of the army, and to tell them that the troubles they augur for their country will fall on their own heads; they are warned that they are only dreaming, and bidden to drop their follies. Another person is then brought on the stage, and asked if he has any news. He answers by a lyric verse, in the style of the *Persae* of Aeschylus: 'the pride of the Persians has fallen, and all the land of Arabia shall also fall'. The end of the dialogue is a general rejoicing, that now men have something to leave to their children. 'I am a poor man', says Critias, 'and I was troubled

[1] i.e. they hoped that the plans and campaigns of Nicephorus Phocas, whose hand lay heavy on the monasteries, would come to grief.

[2] 'Universe' is in Greek *oikoumenē*—the inhabited world—which for the Byzantines meant the world they knew, the world of the 'Oecumenical' patriarch and the 'Oecumenical' emperor. It was—for them—the Universe, the whole of the civilized world.

to think how little I had to leave to my children: but here is enough now to leave them, in the prosperity of our empire: wealth will not abandon us, nor can any nation terrify us.' A friend of Critias then speaks the epilogue: 'I too, Critias, leave this legacy to my children—they shall see Babylon destroyed, Egypt subdued, the children of the Persians reduced to slavery, the raids of the Scythians in the North [the Petchenegs] checked, or even ended. So we, having found the unknown God of the Athenians, and offering Him our adoration, will lift up our hands to the heavens and give Him our thanks for deeming us worthy to be the subjects of such a sovereign. As for the others [i.e. the monks], we will leave them to their folly, and content ourselves with applying to them the words of the saying, "Hippoclides don't care"' (the saying comes from Herodotus, vi. 130).

§ 4. PASSAGES FROM THE *STRATEGICON* OF KEKAUMENOS AND THE *DE OFFICIO REGIS* OF NICULITZAS

(From the text edited by B. Wassiliewsky and V. Jernstedt in Notes of the Historico-Philological Faculty, St. Petersburg, 1896.)

Introduction

The *Strategicon* (or officer's manual) of Kekaumenos, an officer in the imperial service during the eleventh century, is of a somewhat peculiar nature. It is not, like most other Byzantine writings on matters social and political, a stylized treatise based upon ancient models: it is a set of lessons drawn from personal experience and stated in a naïve and simple style. 'I have put these remarks together', says the author, 'with no reference to any other manual or any other sort of book: I have drawn them from my own reasoning and my own experience' (p. 19 of the text). The writer of the treatise would appear to have belonged to an Armenian family: he had held office in the theme of Hellas, about 1050; and he seems to have written his *Strategicon* some time after 1070, and a few years before the accession of Alexius Comnenus (1081). He addresses his book and its maxims to a son, who seems, from internal evidence, to have also been an officer in the imperial service. The Russian editors note that the book falls into four parts: the

first containing maxims and rules for the conduct of civil officials; the second containing rules, backed by examples and instances, for the conduct of a military officer; the third suggesting principles of conduct in private and domestic life: and the fourth dealing with the behaviour proper in times of sedition and civil strife (the middle of the eleventh century was a troubled period in Byzantine history), and ending with a variety of miscellaneous matters which include both dragons and thunderstorms. There is something of a Chinese quality in the work: it might have been written by a mandarin who had imbibed the philosophy of Confucius.

The *Strategicon* is followed, in the manuscript in which it survives, by a much smaller treatise, which is described as an 'Exhortation to a King' (*nouthetētikos pros basilea*), and to which the Latin title *De Officio Regis* has been given by the editors. It is one of the many treatises on kingship written in the course of Byzantine history; but, like the *Strategicon*, it has the peculiar quality of being written by a man of action, and not by a scholar, and of being based on experience rather than books. The writer, a certain Niculitzas, was related to the author of the *Strategicon*, and lived at the same epoch: we learn from his brief treatise that he had served with the Viking Harold Hardrada in a campaign waged by the Byzantine army and its auxiliary forces against Bulgaria in 1040. He wrote his 'Exhortation' some time after 1080 (and therefore a little later than the *Strategicon*); and he may have intended it for the new emperor Alexius Comnenus and the new dynasty inaugurated by his accession. (The accession of Alexius appears to be mentioned in the opening words: 'God has exalted you to the office of king, and made you by his grace, as the phrase goes, "a God upon earth".') We may perhaps regard the pamphlet as a programme for the new dynasty. It is notably liberal in its tone, as it is also removed in the simplicity of its style from the pomp and the swelling phrases of the many 'mirrors of princes' and 'treatises on kingship' produced by Byzantine writers.

(*a*) *The* Strategicon *of Kekaumenos*

The nature of the essay, which runs to some eighty pages in the Greek, is described by the author himself (pp. 75–76). 'I have no

gift of style. I have never been at a school of Greek learning which would furnish me with terms of wit and give me instruction in eloquence. I know that there are some who will find fault with me, and criticize my ignorance. But I did not put these remarks together as a work of art for the public: I have written them for you and your brothers, who are my children and the fruit of my loins given to me by God. I did not write them in choice words, or by telling clever stories which have no profit in them. I have set forth what I have done or had done to me; the things that I saw and learned for myself; the actual doings and happenings of my life from day to day. It may be that my words are naïve; but if you pay good attention to what I say you will find that it is really true.'

(*a*) *Advice on behaviour in the public service* (p. 4). 'If the emperor refers everything to you, and manages the business of his government with you as his agent and mouth-piece, do not be lifted up or despise him. Men are anxious to rise to so great a height, but when they get there—whether by having high qualities, or by industry, or by divine permission—they end by neglecting their duties and becoming a prey to pride; and this is their ruin. So if you—by your high qualities, or by your industry, or by divine permission—succeed in rising to a great height (which I pray may *not* happen to you), do not be contemptuous or uplifted, for fear you should have a great fall; but if by divine permission you prosper, endeavour by your humility and industry to make good use of the turn of God's mercy. Do not be insatiate in taking: be even-handed to all men: make no man your enemy by [demanding] gifts, and do not fall foul of fortune: what is voluntarily given is enough for you.

(p. 5) 'If you are in the service of a ruler, do not serve him just as a ruler and a mere man: serve him as king, and as if he were God. If he be without knowledge and unfit for his position, and you are far above him in knowledge and wisdom and fitness, do not despise him, and [?or] he will dismiss you. Do not say, "He dare not do me any harm". I have seen in my time many men dismissed and disgraced in that way.

'If you are in the service of the king, and hold a subordinate

position, guard your speech at all times, and submit yourself to your superiors; act deliberately as if you were the least of all men, and then God will exalt you. Do not be harsh or inflexible, and do not fail to order yourself reverently to your superiors: pay them attention, but do not pay it perpetually, for familiarity is wont to breed contempt.'

(*b*) *Advice to a teacher or philosopher* (p. 8). 'If you are a teacher or a philosopher, try by your style and speech, and by your general activity and the way in which you deal with affairs, to give evidence of your knowledge and to show that your study and schooling have not been in vain. Act as a man of business and like a public figure (in the Greek, *oikonomikos kai politikos*). By a public figure I do not mean an actor or a player; I mean a man who can do good to the whole state and who can keep evil from touching it. If you do that, the result will be that you will win honour and gain affection, not only from those who actually see you, but also from those who only hear of your virtue and understanding. Seek, then, to make your knowledge evident to all by your works and your actions.'

(*c*) *Advice to a son serving in the army* (p. 20). 'Do not want to be a public figure: you cannot be both an actor and an army-officer. If there are some men who do army-service in that way, their conduct is not sensible but rather improper. The man who shows no restraint in social intercourse and who indulges in laughter is despised and blamed for irregular conduct. A commanding officer should be an example and a model to all his men. If an ordinary private soldier is guilty of folly, nobody knows of his fault, just because he is insignificant; but if you, a commanding officer, commit the smallest slip which hardly matters at all, you are noticed at once, and the report of it is immediately spread abroad in all men's hearing.'

The early part of the essay has thus dealt with the rules of behaviour in the public service (including some advice to 'a teacher or philosopher') and with rules of conduct for a military officer. The middle part (pp. 36–64), which is the longest, is concerned with the conduct of private life (or *oikonomia*), and with the moral rules and maxims of ordinary behaviour. It contains remarks,

sometimes shrewd and sometimes commonplace, on borrowing and lending, on agriculture, on tax-farming, and (p. 53) on 'not falling into the hands of the physician'.[1] But towards the end of the essay the author turns back to politics and political problems.

(*d*) *Advice for times of sedition and civil war* (p. 64). 'If a man rebels and calls himself emperor, do not enter into his counsel, but depart from him. If you cannot fight him and overthrow him, [at any rate] fight for the emperor and the peace of the whole [body politic]. If, as I say, you cannot fight the rebel, depart from him; and occupying some stronghold with your men, send word to the emperor and try to do him such service as you can in order that you and your children and your followers may have honour. If you have not men enough to occupy a stronghold, leave everything and take refuge with the emperor. But if, on account of your family, you dare not do this, then join his side [i.e. the side of the rebel], but let your heart be on the emperor's side, and, when you can, show some sort of action worthy of praise. For when you join his side [i.e. take part with the rebel], you should draw to you those of your friends who are of a high spirit, practise on him [i.e. act secretly against him], and have faith in the emperor in Constantinople; then you shall not fail of your hope. Send word to him [i.e. the emperor] secretly. . . . If you live in a castle on the East or on the West which has a keep [*koula*], and a rebellion arises, stand aside, gather some men together, and fight the rebel. But if many men gather together in revolt, then you should collect your family and any reinforcements you may have at hand and bring them into the keep; you should send word to the rest of your family and bring them in too; but you should keep in reserve enough of your family to act [? where they can] on your behalf and on behalf of your household and slaves and the free retainers whose duty it is to serve on horseback and join the array. Let other men, too, do likewise by your counsel and advice. Then, if you keep your family inside [the castle and its keep], I feel sure that when the enemy thinks fit to attack you, you will by God's

[1] The words used by the author are the same as those in Ecclesiasticus xxxviii. 19. Did he know that book of the Apocrypha? It has various analogies to his argument, which is in the tradition of the old 'wisdom-literature'.

grace overthrow him and put him to flight. If you do not do as I bid you, you are likely to suffer as the ancestor of [your kinsman] Niculitzas suffered at Larissa, at the hands of Samuel [of Bulgaria].'

The interest of this passage is that it throws light on the growth of feudal conditions in the medieval Byzantine Empire. Large estates were accumulated, from the tenth century onwards: great landowners acquired power, collected retainers, challenged imperial authority, and occasionally rose in rebellion and attempted to grasp the crown (see the note on Byzantine feudalism, above, p. 5). Feudal conditions, with private war and unruly barons, were thus prevalent in Eastern as well as in Western Europe. The Byzantine emperors, threatened by the growth of feudal estates (and also by the growth of monastic property), attempted to recover power by the encouragement of small landowners (and also by legislation, of the nature of our English statutes of mortmain, intended to prevent land from falling into the dead hand of monasteries (see above, p. 117)).

(*b*) *The* De Officiis Regis *of Niculitzas*

The brief treatise of Niculitzas has some echoes (which may be accidental) of a speech *De Regno* delivered by Synesius of Cyrene in the presence of the emperor Arcadius nearly seven hundred years before (*circa* A.D. 400). Synesius, an author who was studied and imitated by many Byzantine writers, had protested in his day against the use of foreign mercenaries drawn from the ranks of the Goths: Niculitzas, who knew at first hand from his own military career the foreign mercenaries of the Byzantine Empire (and especially the Varangians drawn from Scandinavia and England) makes the same protest centuries later. Synesius, again, had criticized the seclusion of the emperors of his time in their palace in Constantinople; Niculitzas, at the end of his treatise, repeats the criticism, and exhorts the Byzantine emperor of his day to show himself to his people and to appear in the field at the head of his army.[1] The parallel is curious; but perhaps it only

[1] See Barker, *From Alexander to Constantine*, pp. 380 ff. The extracts from the treatise of Niculitzas which follow have already appeared in that work, pp. 387–91, in connexion with extracts from the speech of Synesius.

shows that the same causes combined to produce the same effects in 1080 as they had done in 400. In any case the treatise of Niculitzas, apart from any parallels or any question of its possible sources, deserves consideration on its own merits, as a fresh and simple statement of the views of a Byzantine soldier and officer on the nature and the problems of the empire of his day.

(*a*) *The King and the Law* (p. 93). 'Some say that the emperor (*basileus*) is not subject to law, but *is* law. I agree. But there is this qualification. When he acts and legislates [duly], he does well and we obey him. If, however, he should say, "Drink poison", you will in no case do so. And if he should say, "Go to the sea and cross it [like?] a diver", you cannot do this either. From this you may know that the *basileus*, since he is a man, is subject to the laws of piety. This is the reason why we write this treatise for pious and Christian kings hereafter.

'God has raised you, our revered lord, to the throne of kingship and made you by His grace, as you are called, a terrestrial god, to do and to act as you will; therefore let your acts and deeds be full of understanding and truth, and let justice be in your heart. Look therefore—and act—with eyes of equality upon all men, both upon those who are in authority and upon all others; do not evilly entreat some of your subjects, at your will, and confer benefits on others against all right reason. Let there be equality for all; let him who offends receive his deserts according to his offence; but if you feel sympathy for him and pardon his offence, that too is a godlike and kingly act. Grieve not those who offend not, but rather, if you will, do them good. He who offends not against you is better than he who offends; and if you confer benefits on the offender . . . [lacuna]. . . you will appear as one who has done good to the evil and evil to the good.'

(*b*) *The use of foreign troops* (p. 95). 'Foreigners who are not of royal descent in their own country I would not have you advance to great honours, nor would I have you entrust them with great offices; for if you do so you will do no good at all to yourself or to your officers who are of Roman [i.e. Byzantine] origin. When you honour a foreigner, who has come to you from England, with the dignity of colonel or general, how can it be an honour to make

a Roman a general? You will make him wholly an enemy. That is not all; in the foreigner's own country, when men hear that he has come to such honour, they will laugh and say, "Here we hold the man for naught and lo, when he has gone away to Romania, he has gained great honour; it would seem that in Romania there is no man to be found who is fit for the position, and that is why our countryman has been exalted; if the Romans had been efficient, they would not have raised this man to such a height." Let not Your Majesty answer, "I conferred this benefit upon him in order that others might join my service when they saw what I had done." That is not a good policy. If you wish, you can have as many men as you would like me to bring to your banners, merely for food and clothing. It means much to the Romans, Sire, that you should not bestow great honours on foreigners; for if foreigners serve you merely in return for their uniform and rations, you may be assured that they will none the less serve you faithfully and whole-heartedly, looking to you only for the gift of a trifle of money and rations.'

(*c*) *The value of equality* (pp. 98–99). 'Let me tell you, Sire, how the beginning of the reign of Michael the Paphlagonian [1034–41] came about. That monarch of blessed memory had no famous ancestors; he came of a stock that was undistinguished and altogether humble; but he had great merits. Some ignorant persons report that he was noble and of good birth; but he was meanly born and of lowly origin. For myself I say that all men, kings and rulers and bread-winners alike, are the children of one man, Adam; and I have seen those who were puffed up in their own conceit turning to robbery and divination and the practice of magical arts. *Those* are the people I call ignoble. For man, who is a rational being, becomes, if he so will, a god by the grace of God. Such was that king of blessed memory, Michael IV. He was rich, as I have said, in great merits; but he had many kinsmen by blood who were poor men and for whom provision was made by public charity.'

(*d*) *The King as a model for imitation* (pp. 99–100). 'The king is a model and example for all men, and all look to him and imitate his ways. If his ways are good, they are eager to follow them

speedily; if they are bad and blameworthy, men still do the same. I bid you, therefore, lay hold on the four virtues, and make them all yours: courage—by which I mean courage of the soul—justice, temperance, and wisdom (*phronēsis*). There is a wisdom that acts for good, and a wisdom that acts for evil; the same is true of courage; but you will never find temperance or justice active for evil. Lay hold, as I have said, on these four virtues, and you will be raised from earth to the heavens; your power will be great; the Lord will give you length of days; and justice and truth will abound on your countenance and in your heart.'

The writer then recalls how Augustus was aided and admonished first by Athenodorus, a philosopher from Alexandria, and then by Abgar the prince of Edessa.[1] He draws the following moral from the record. 'Take to yourself such a man, and give him leave to admonish you at all times for what you have said and done that is contrary to reason.[2] Do not say, "I am wise and know all things": there are many things you know, but there are more of which you are ignorant. God alone has all truth: man, of whatever rank he may be, has deficiencies; as the angel said to St. Zosimas, "No man has perfection." '

(*e*) *The duty of the King to show himself in all his dominions* (pp. 103–4). 'I know, Your Majesty, that the nature of man desires relaxation. But there has come into vogue a fashion which is not helpful, but rather the reverse: that the emperor should not go out into the countries which are in his obedience, on the east and on the west, but should spend his time in Constantinople as if he were imprisoned there. Now if some other person had fixed you in one city, you would in that case have had to make an effort and to go abroad. But as it is, you have inflicted this on yourself. What is one to say? I bid you go out into the countries which are

[1] Edessa, one of the earliest homes of Christianity in the region of Syria, had a prince called Abgar who according to tradition corresponded with Jesus. This may be the basis of the idea that an Abgar of Edessa was the adviser of Augustus. It is a matter of historical record that Arius of Alexandria and Athenagoras of Tarsus were the instructors of Augustus in philosophy (Piganiol, *Histoire de Rome*, 4th edition, p. 230): and 'Athenodorus of Alexandria' would seem to be a combination or confusion of the two.

[2] It was the theory of the Stoics that the king, if not himself a philosopher like Marcus Aurelius, should have a philosophic adviser.

in your obedience and among your provinces: see for yourself the injustices suffered by the poor, and the doings of the tax-gatherers whom you send out; see if the poor have been wronged, and set all things to rights. Then the provinces of your Roman subjects and the countries of the nations in your allegiance will have a king, and a real person who looks after their welfare; you will know the capacity of each province and fortress and country; you will know how each is situated, what injuries it suffers, and what benefits it receives; there will be no rebellion, nor any revolt against your tax-gatherers, but all your dominions will be in peace. I know that your ministers, in order to save you from trouble, will advise you that this is not a good policy and tell you that you will oppress your countries and provinces by making a progress through them with an army and a royal escort. They may also say that if you leave Byzantium, another man will make himself emperor in your place. I have thought of this and laughed at it. For the person left by you in the palace, and charged with the direction of matters that come to your notice there from the nations and the Romans, will be wholly effective and adequate, and he will be likely to keep on the watch and to do what is proper to be done. May I also tell you another thing? The emperors and those who bore the title of Augustus among the Romans always followed the policy which I am now proposing to you. This was not only done by those who ruled in Rome: it was also done by those who ruled in Byzantium—the great Constantine and his son Constantius, and the emperors Julian, Jovian, and Theodosius. Sometimes they went east and sometimes west, but they spent little of their time in Byzantium. All countries [in the Empire] were then at peace: all Europe and Africa, and the finest part of Asia up to the Euphrates valley and Adiabene—Armenia and Syria, Phoenicia, Palestine, Egypt, and the great and celebrated Babylon itself—all these were subject to the Romans. . . .'

§ 5. PSELLUS

Introduction

Constantine Psellus—generally known by his monastic name as Michael Psellus—was born in Nicomedia in 1018, and educated in Constantinople. Trained in law by Xiphilinus (who was afterwards patriarch), he first followed a legal career, becoming ultimately a judge; but when the emperor Constantine IX founded two schools—one of law and one of philosophy—at Constantinople in 1045, he became the head of the school of philosophy, while his old teacher Xiphilinus became the head of the law-school. He drew pupils, according to his own account, both from the 'Celts' in the West and from the 'Arabs' in the East; he expounded Plato to them in his lectures, in opposition to (or at any rate in departure from) the prevalent Aristotelianism of Byzantium; and in his own writings he sought to cultivate a Platonic grace of style as well as a Platonic (or neo-Platonic) mode of thought, seeking to interpret the dialogues of Plato—in the same way as he also sought to interpret the epics of Homer—as so many prophecies or anticipations of Christian theology. But his philosophic teaching and writing still left him time and appetite for a political career; and, supple as he was able, he adapted himself readily to the veering winds and various tempers of a troubled succession of Byzantine emperors, sometimes conspiring but always prospering, and steadily advancing from office to office. Constantine IX made him first secretary and gave him the title of *hypatos philosophias*; and though for a time, on Constantine's death, he joined Xiphilinus, his old master, in the solitude of a monastery on Mount Olympus in Bithynia (1055), he was soon back at court and ready for each new political emergency. He served the usurper Isaac Comnenus (1057–9); he served under Isaac's two immediate successors; and he eventually became first minister under another emperor who had once been his pupil, Michael VII Ducas (1071–8). The date of his death is uncertain; but it may have been 1078. With him died a type of the Byzantine scholar-statesman—a recurrent type such as we find again in Theodorus Metochites (see below, p. 174); but he sank below

others of that type in the servility of his statesmanship, as he also rose above them, and high above them, in the range and quality of his scholarship. He was a trimmer and a flatterer; and the most that can be said in his favour as a statesman is that he was *infelix opportunitate vitae*, living as he did in one of the most troubled and melancholy epochs of his country's history. All the more credit is due to the passion of his scholarship. He had an eager eye of observation, which swept its gaze over a wide world of knowledge; and he had a nimble and rapid pen, which recorded his observation in a style which commended him to his age. The ghost of Plato, which has had many interpreters (or misinterpreters)—Plotinus in one age, Psellus in another, and Plethon in still another—may well offer him a tribute of gratitude, perhaps with some qualification, and even with something of a wry smile, but none the less with sincerity. Psellus brought back Plato to Byzantium: he set him again by the side of Aristotle, long dominant in a solitary majesty: he may even be said to have prepared the way for the reception of Plato in the Italy of the fifteenth-century Renaissance. He thus helped to revive a part of the Greek inheritance which had long been overlaid; and 'Hellenism' meant something more after the life and work of Psellus.

Yet he was too diffuse and too polymathic. The historian of Byzantine literature has compared him with Albertus Magnus and Roger Bacon in the range of his literary activity.[1] He certainly wrote on a large variety of subjects—theology and philosophy; history and law; physics and mathematics; grammar and antiquities—and he wrote in a variety of forms, ranging from historical narrative to poetry, and from philosophical treatises to set speeches and some hundreds of letters. Little survives today in men's memories. Historical scholars may still consult his *Chronographia*, which records the history of the years A.D. 976–1077, or some of his *Funeral Orations* (especially that on Xiphilinus), or some of his hundreds of letters; but his philosophical writings lie buried in dust, and his poems lie buried with them. The few passages which follow may serve to give some indication of his

[1] Krumbacher, *Byzantinische Litteraturgeschichte*, p. 435. Psellus has also been compared, by a French scholar, with Voltaire. This seems even more dubious.

character and some notion of his teaching. (The passages are taken from C. N. Sathas, *Mesaionikē Bibliothēkē*, iv and v, and from Migne's *Patrologia Graeco-Latina*, cxxii.)

(*a*) *Psellus on his lectures in the School of Philosophy*

(Sathas, iv. 508, from a letter to Michael Cerularius, patriarch of Constantinople 1043–58.)

'We have made Celts [from the West] and Arabs [from the East] our captives, and men have been drawn by our fame from the other continent also [Africa]. The Nile waters the ground for Egyptians, and my tongue does the like for their minds. Ask the Persians and Ethiopians; they will tell you that they have admired me and sought me out; and now a man from the boundaries of Babylon has come to drink from my waters with an unquenchable thirst. One of the nations calls me a lamp of learning, another addresses me as the light [of the mind], and others in other styles distinguish me by the most honourable of appellations.'[1]

(*b*) *Psellus on rhetoric, philosophy, the life of society and politics, and the life of contemplation*

1. *On rhetoric and philosophy* (Sathas, v. 148, from an encomium addressed to John the Metropolitan). 'Philosophy needs the tongue of rhetoric, and art [i.e. rhetoric] in turn needs knowledge. He who is merely a philosopher is without grace (*charis*): he who boasts art by itself is deprived of the crowning property of substance; but even the man who unites both is but a tinkling cymbal (as the Apostle says) if he does not also know matters political—unless, indeed, he wishes to withdraw himself to a distance from polity [i.e. social and political life], in which case even a single gift (and by that I mean the gift of philosophy) is enough for him. But many of those who concern themselves with some single one of these difficult subjects lift their eyebrows in criticism of others, seeking to judge between things which they do not understand.

[1] A passage in the History (*Chronographia*) is on the same high note (Sathas, iv. 124). 'It is testified of me that my tongue flowers with blossoms even in its simple utterances, and that without any effort of mine some natural fragrance is distilled from it. I should not know this myself, if many persons had not told me so during my lectures.'

'There is nothing comparable to philosophy, which is drawn from all studies and contains a synthesis of them all: the man who attempted to make a comparison [between it and other studies] would be judging between it and itself; one cannot, upon that basis, preserve it in its position as the art of all the arts and the knowledge of all forms of knowledge.

'Between the art of rhetoric and the art of legislation [here Psellus turns to an issue on which Aristotle had challenged the rhetorician Isocrates at the end of the *Ethics* and in the *Rhetoric*[1]] there is this great difference: the one [i.e. rhetoric] provides and brings into order the principles and the proofs to be used in trials, instructing the antagonists in the best methods which the plaintiff and the defendant can respectively employ; the art of legislation, strengthened thereby [i.e. by the lessons of rhetoric], discovers the laws proper to each case and gives the conclusions drawn from principles.'

2. *On the two branches of philosophy* (Sathas, v. 256, from a letter to an unknown correspondent). 'To my thinking . . . philosophy is divided into two parts. One of these is free from affections [i.e. it has the quality which the Stoics called 'apathy'] and severe: it consists in what the pure intelligence presents to thought. The other part shares the affections of men and has the quality of humanity (*philanthrōpia*). The former I praise, but I do not love it: the latter I admire less, but I desire it more. It is the cause of my having tended the old age of my parents and loved my brothers: it is the cause of my giving what I ought to give to my friends.' Psellus thus suggests that he prefers social and political philosophy to metaphysical theory.

3. *On practical philosophy and the 'political' man* (Sathas, iv. 202–3, from the *Chronographia*). 'The type which is free from affections and inflexible I set above the spheres, and beyond the circumference of the universe. But life with the body, being the more social,[2] is more fitting to present circumstances; and the part of the soul which is subject to affection corresponds more to

1 See Barker, translation of Aristotle's *Politics* (1946), pp. 358–60.

2 The text in Sathas has a word which does not occur in the lexicon, but which may mean 'nearer'. But the sense of 'more social' seems to be intended.

our bodily life. For as I reflect on the matter I see three stages which are adjusted to [different] conditions of the soul. One stage is that in which the soul lives in and by itself, liberated from the body, with its strings stretched tight and not giving out a full note: the other two stages I assign to life with the body. For if the soul, taking its station in the middle condition of life, in the fullness of strong and varied affections, should choose as it were the exact centre of the circle, the result is a social [literally, a 'political'] man; and it thus becomes a being which is neither purely divine and intellectual, nor, again, a being in love with the body and full of various affections. But if it turns aside from this middle position, and going far away from it lives a life which declines into the sway of the affections, it brings about a dissolute and pleasure-seeking temper.

'Now if a man should have the strength to draw a veil over things appertaining to the body, and should take his stand on the summit of the intellectual life, what has he to do with ordinary affairs? "I have put off", says the Scripture, "my cloak: how shall I put it on again?" Let a man go up to a high and aery mountain, and take his stand with the angels, so that he may shine with a greater light: if he does that, he has made himself distinct and apart from the rest of mankind. But if none of us can triumph so utterly over all the elements of his nature, and if one of us, perchance, be entrusted with political undertakings, let him handle affairs politically, and let him make no pretence to severity of standard. It is not all men who can be guided by an exact equality of balance. If a man therefore should offer such excuse for his obliquity, he has escaped the consequences that follow upon it.

'Wherefore the man who plays the philosopher in unphilosophic matters is not a philosopher: he is rather the imitation of a philosopher.' This plea of Psellus for the 'political' man seems to be a plea for his own career.

Another and somewhat similar argument which deals with the stages or degrees of virtue may be found in a passage of the work of Psellus entitled *De Omnifaria Doctrina* (or, in Greek, *Didascalia Pantodapē*), printed in Migne's *Patrologia G.-L.*, cxxii. 721. He begins by premising that just as a painter must always look at his

model, so must a man who sketches or paints the likeness of virtue in his own person keep his eyes constantly fixed on God, who is his model. There are, he then proceeds to say, four forms or degrees of virtue. 'The man who has theurgic virtue [the virtue that makes men, as it were, gods] is called *theopatōr* [a word, meaning 'father of God', applied to David by ecclesiastical writers]; for since he makes men gods, he is named by the name *theopatōr*. The man who has contemplative virtue is called "god-like". The man who has cleansing or purgatorial virtue [which purges him of his passions by penance] is called "angelic" [in the Greek *daimonios*]. The man who has social (in the Greek *politikē*) virtue is called "good". . . . The man who is being drawn upward into the likeness of God must thus first become good, then angelic, then god-like, and finally a *theopator*. The angelic man and the good man may change and turn at times to evil, and perhaps the same is true of the god-like or contemplative man; but the theurgic man, or *theopator*, who has entered into the divine ecstasy, will never change or turn to what is the opposite of virtue, being as he is wholly out of himself [*ekstatikos*] and having become purely God.'

In a previous passage (p. 720) Psellus had defined contemplative virtue as the virtue which is 'the intelligence's contemplation of itself,' and theurgic virtue as 'that which awakens the divinest part of the soul, uniting it to God Himself and bringing about a divine frenzy.' This is the language of Plotinus and neo-Platonism; and in one of his orations we find Psellus, 'the political man', turning round upon himself and definitely speaking as a pure neo-Platonist.

4. *On the culmination of philosophy* (Sathas, v. 445, from the funeral oration on Xiphilinus). 'What is there more to be desired than the escape of the soul, when, departing so far as it can from nature and the body, and mastering the affections that trouble it, it turns in upon itself and contemplates its own order; when, again, moving upward to what is more divine, it contemplates the life of intelligence, and lays hold of higher things without any demonstration of reason; when, finally, passing on thence, beyond all potency and operation, it stands on the topmost tower of its

own life, and setting before itself the oneness of nature is knit to the true One itself, becoming spirit and intelligence and very God? Whereto if a man attain, he has neither regard nor discernment for the things of this world; so perfect is the identification (*henōsis*) of the One with the One.' This is an echo of the *Enneades* of Plotinus, I. vi.

§ 6. A BYZANTINE COMMENTARY ON ARISTOTLE'S *POLITICS*

By Michael of Ephesus (*circa* 1070–80)

Introduction

Michael of Ephesus, who was perhaps a disciple of Psellus, would seem to have lectured on the *Politics* (and also the *Ethics*) of Aristotle in the school of philosophy founded by Constantine IX Monomachus in 1045. He had also lectured, at an earlier date, on the physical and metaphysical writings of Aristotle; and it was late in his life (probably after 1070)[1] that he addressed himself first to the *Ethics* and afterwards to the *Politics*. It is a matter of interest, and perhaps also of some importance, that the study of Aristotle's *Politics* was thus resuscitated in a Byzantine school of philosophy as early as the latter half of the eleventh century. It was not until the latter half of the thirteenth century that the *Politics* became known to the West, and was used by St. Thomas Aquinas, in the Latin translation made by William of Moerbeke. Byzantium was here two centuries in advance of the Latin West.

The commentary on the *Politics* by Michael of Ephesus is the source and basis of the scholia (or notes) which appear in a Berlin MS. of the *Politics*. These scholia are printed by O. Immisch in his Teubner text of the *Politics*, first published in 1909. Some extracts from them are here translated, along with the passages of the *Politics* to which they refer. They do not show that the commentator attempted to study or explain the historical and political background of the *Politics*: he was rather, as Immisch notes, an imitator and follower of the neo-Platonic style of interpretation, and confined himself, in the main, to subtleties of philosophic

[1] See note 2 on p. 140 below.

interpretation. But occasionally he addresses himself, in the manner of a modern scholar, to questions of textual criticism; and occasionally, too, he refers, in a number of interesting passages, to the conditions of his own time, and seeks to draw comparisons between the past and the present.

(*a*) *Two passages on sovereignty from the commentary on book* III, *cc. x and xi of the* Politics

1. *The text of Aristotle*, Politics, book III, c. x, §§ 1–2. 'A difficulty arises when we turn to consider what body of persons should be sovereign in a polis—the people at large (*to plēthos*); the wealthy; the better sort of men; the one man who is best of all; or the tyrant. All these alternatives appear to involve unpleasant results: indeed how can it be otherwise? [Take, for example, the case of the people.] What if the poor, on the ground of their being a majority, proceed to divide among themselves the possessions of the wealthy—will not this be unjust? "No, by heaven" (a democrat may reply); "it has been justly decreed so by the sovereign".... "But if this is not the extreme of injustice" (we may reply in return), "what *is*?" Whenever a majority of any sort, irrespective of wealth and poverty, divides among its members the possessions of a minority, that majority is obviously ruining the state. But goodness can never ruin anything that has goodness, nor can justice, in its nature, be ruinous to a state. It is therefore clear that a law of this kind cannot possibly be just.'

The commentary in the Scholia. 'He takes first, among the alternatives included in his list, the idea that the people at large ought to be sovereign. He also takes into his view the law which enjoins that the people should have authority because it has the sovereign power of doing what it wills to do. Having taken these points he brings together the difficulties which they present. [On the one hand] the sovereign is something in the nature of law, and whatever is the pleasure of law is just. [On the other hand] he says that if the possessions of the rich be taken by the poor, and if the poor, by themselves, distribute them among themselves—in other words, if the majority, composed of those who distribute among themselves the property of the rich, take away the property of the

minority, and distribute it among themselves—it is plain that they will ruin the state; for they alone will then be sovereign. But the constitution was connected with the exercise of sovereignty by others also, and by that I mean not only those who were formerly rich . . .' [here there is a lacuna in the MS., but perhaps the commentator added 'but *all* the other members of the State'.]

2. *The text of Aristotle*, Politics, book III, cc. x, § 5, *and* xi, §§ 1–2. 'It may perhaps be urged that there is another alternative; that it is a poor sort of policy to vest sovereignty in any man at all, subject as men are to the passions that beset the soul, and not to vest it in the law. But the law itself may incline either towards oligarchy or towards democracy; and what difference will the sovereignty of law then make in the problems which have been raised? The consequences already stated will follow just the same. . . . But the first of the alternatives suggested—that the people at large should be sovereign rather than the few best—would appear to be defensible; and while it presents some difficulty it perhaps also contains some truth. There is this to be said for the Many. Each of them by himself may not be of a good quality; but when they all come together, it is possible that they may surpass—collectively and as a body, although not individually—the quality of the few best. . . . Where there are many, each can bring his share of goodness and moral prudence; and when all meet together the people may thus become something in the nature of a single person, who—as he has many feet, many hands, and many senses—may also have many qualities of character and intelligence.'

The commentary in the Scholia. 'But perhaps (he adds) it may be said that the result just mentioned is not due to the law being bad, but rather to the sovereign being a man who is subject to the passions that beset men, or, in other words, subject to desire for possessions and self-aggrandizement and the rest of the passions which Aristotle has mentioned. . . . The gist of his argument here would appear to be to the following effect:

'Perhaps it may be urged that the sovereign who is obviously [responsible] for these consequences is a man who has the passions that beset men; yet the law [itself] is not bad. It is not, therefore, through the badness of law that these results ensue; it is rather

through sovereignty being vested in men who are the slaves of passions; [in a word] it is a consequence of the fact that the Many have [only] a part or parts [of virtue], while the good man has all its qualities in one. This is the difficulty which Aristotle has stated a little before [really he states it a little *afterwards*] in the course of his argument. But the difficulty would seem to be capable of being solved, and to admit of some explanation or [at any rate] some advance to a solution. The explanation is to the effect that the Many would *not* act unjustly towards the Few and the Rich, if the sum total of them all were a body [*plēthos*] which was equal to, and like, one good man. But how, it may be asked, can the sum total of them all be the same as one good man? It is impossible; and so they *will* act unjustly towards the rich. There is, however, a solution (Aristotle says) to the original difficulty [i.e. the difficulty arising from the fact that the Many have only a part or parts of virtue]; and this is the line of the solution. Each man [separately] has only one attribute of virtue, but all men, when taken together, have all the attributes, and possess the whole sum, of the virtue to be found in the [one] good or best man; from which it follows that the possessions of the rich would *not* be distributed [by the Many among the poor], nor would they [the Many] act unjustly towards the rich, because the sum total of them all is like a single good and just man.'

(*b*) *A passage on the rule of law as compared with the rule of a king*

The text of Aristotle, Politics, book III, c. xv, §§ 3–4. 'Is it more expedient to be ruled by the one best man or by the best laws? Those who hold that kingship is expedient argue that law can only lay down general rules; it cannot issue commands to deal with various different conjunctures; and the rule of the letter of law is therefore a folly in any and every art.'

Commentary in the Scholia. 'He says that those who hold that it is more expedient to be ruled by a king than by laws argue that law lays down a general rule (e.g. "if a stranger come up against the walls, let him be put to death"), but has nothing to say about particular conjunctures: men should therefore be ruled by a king, so that a decision may thereby be given on what is to be done in

particular conjunctures. He says that the law is a general proposition (such as "the best man should always win the crown", or "all strangers who come up against the walls must die", or other like rules); and he holds that this general proposition ought to be present and known to the rulers—as indeed [in practice] they actually do know it. If therefore the rulers know both the general and the particular, I say that it is better for a man, and not law, to rule. Alternatively, one might say—on the assumption that the general proposition ought to be present to rulers, so that they may act with an eye to it as a standard to be followed—that it is better for law to rule, since rulers cannot deal with particular conjunctures in the absence of law.'[1]

Passages in the Scholia which refer to contemporary (circa A.D. 1070) *conditions*

(*a*) In book II of the *Politics*, c. xi, § 12, Aristotle remarks that a man who has spent money in order to get office may naturally be expected to fall into the habit of trying to make a profit on the transaction. The commentator notes, 'That this is most true is proved by the carrion-crows of our own time.'

(*b*) In book IV, c. iii, § 8, Aristotle speaks of some forms of 'perverted' constitutions as 'more than ordinarily severe and dominant'. The commentator notes, 'This means despotic government, such as the kingship of our own times.'

(*c*) In book IV, c. ix, § 10, Aristotle remarks that a properly mixed constitution should owe its stability to its own intrinsic strength, and not to external support. The commentator, taking his cue from the words 'external support', notes, 'as today the Turks, who are external to us, . . . desire our stability, for our stability is also theirs'.[2]

[1] The three passages translated above from the commentary in the Scholia are not particularly lucid (perhaps the Scholia abbreviate too much the original commentary of Michael of Ephesus, and thereby obscure the lucidity which it may have had in its fuller form); but there is point and pith in the brief observations contained in the passages translated below, at the end of this section.

[2] The Seljukian Turks had defeated the Byzantines heavily at the battle of Manzikert in 1071. At that time they can hardly have desired the stability of the Byzantine Empire. But towards 1096, when the First Crusade was impending from the Latin West, the Seljuks may have desired the stability of the Empire

(*d*) In book v, c. xi, § 15, Aristotle notes that tyrants are always opposed to the good because they are a double danger to their authority—a danger in thinking it shame to be governed as if they were slaves, and a danger in their general spirit of loyalty and their refusal to betray one another or anybody else. The commentator notes, 'This is particularly so nowadays, my dear Aristotle, and this is the reason why I am a beggar.'

§ 7. *STEPHANITES AND ICHNELATES*

(*circa* 1080, in the Greek version)

The book which bears this title is a series of animal stories or fables, dealing with the theme of the proper government of a kingdom, and thus belonging to the *genre* of 'Mirrors of Princes'. It is an Oriental work, which travelled gradually through the centuries from India to the West. It began its career in a Sanskrit version (at least as early as A.D. 500, but possibly much earlier), which passed into a Pehlevi version in the sixth century, and from that into an Arabic version (styled *Kalīlah wa Dimnah*) in the course of the eighth. (There was also an old Syriac version from the Pehlevi, made as early as about A.D. 570; but the main Syriac version which has come down to us was made not from the Pehlevi, but from the Arabic, at some date in the tenth or eleventh century.) From this Arabic version of the eighth century there was made, about 1080, for the future emperor Alexius Comnenus,[1] a Greek version in which the Arabic title *Kalīlah wa Dimnah* was turned, by a fancied and false etymology (on the supposition that Kalīlah was connected with the Arabic word for 'crown', which in Greek is *stephanos*, and that Dimnah was connected with the Arabic word for 'traces', which in Greek is *ichnē*), into the Greek title *Stephanites and Ichnelates*. This Greek version was in turn translated into Slavonic languages; and by the fourteenth and

as a bulwark against the Crusaders. This would suggest that the date of the scholia may be as late as about 1096.

1 This fact—that the translation was made for Alexius Comnenus and may have been studied by that astute emperor—may justify the inclusion, in a volume which deals with Byzantine thought, of passages from a work which is not itself Byzantine, but Oriental in origin.

fifteenth centuries the fables penetrated in one form or another into most of the languages of Western Europe.

The framework in which *Stephanites and Ichnelates* is set is that of a series of conversations between a king and a philosopher, with the king asking brief questions and the philosopher answering at length by a parable (or parables) in which animals play the chief part. This framework of questions and answers was an old device which had been applied to problems of government as long ago as the beginning of the second century B.C. It appeared in 'the Questions of Menander', supposed to be addressed by a Greek ruler in India to some Hindu sages (these questions, and the answers to them, are preserved in Pali): it also appears in the 'Questions of Ptolemy II', which are preserved in Greek in a document called the *Letter of Aristeas*.[1] The novelty in *Stephanites and Ichnelates* is that the answers to the king's questions are given in the form of animal stories or fables (some twenty in number) which lend them some piquancy and point. The first fable, for instance, is that of the lion, the ox, and the two jackals; and the point of it is that the cunning jackal, Ichnelates, in spite of the dissuasion of his fellow jackal Stephanites, sows dissension between the lion (the king) and the ox (his minister), and does them both harm without doing himself any good. All the fables have a similar moral for the edification of princes. They are 'reflections on government', of little profundity (indeed the reflections and the morals are sadly obvious), but gaining some point and acquiring some force from the form in which they are cast. In this way they stand in the succession of treatises for the guidance of kings which recur in the history of Byzantine literature, from the 'expositions' of Agapetus in the reign of Justinian down to the 'testament' composed for his son by Manuel II in the beginning of the fifteenth century.

The extracts which follow from the first fable may illustrate the sort of moral which the animals who play their parts in it are made to point. The translation is from the text edited by Vittorio Puntoni (Florence, 1889).

[1] See Barker, *From Alexander to Constantine*, pp. 135–8.

The Fable of the Lion, the Ox and the Jackals

(*a*) *How a king should choose his ministers*

pp. 63–65. 'When Ichnelates saw that he had won the favour of the lion, he said: "Sire, the subjects of the king should refer to him all things needful; for then he can award to each the honour that is his due. . . . He must not put on a man's feet the ornament that belongs to his head; neither must he set on his head the ornament meant for his feet. The man who sets a sapphire and precious pearls in lead does more dishonour to himself than to the pearls. A ruler must discriminate among his subjects, as a general must among his soldiers, or a high priest among men of learning and virtue. Leaders of the people do not succeed in their policies by the number [of their ministers], but by making the best choice. . . . Men in authority should promote not only those who are eminent in birth, but also those who are men of consideration and able to render service. They must not be content to employ only those who are about their person or who serve as their attendants; they must summon to their service men who come from a distance and are renowned for their understanding and learning. Nothing is closer to a man than his own body; but when illness comes upon him, the man who is ill will seek to get medicine from a distance. Mice often live in the palaces of kings; but they are not to be honoured above the rest of their fellows simply because they are near kings. Consider wild birds: is not the hawk summoned by the king to his service because of his intrinsic value, and is not that the reason why he takes him and carries him on his arm?" '

(*b*) *The dangers which threaten a king*

p. 82. 'Ichnelates said, "The lion has now become altogether the tool of the ox, and despises all other advisers. But there are six things which cause a king to be despised and destroyed. The first of them is failure to follow the policies that suit circumstances: to be weak where severity is needed, and to be harsh where flattery is in place. The second is a lack of adequate and wise followers and proper advisers. The third is sedition among

his subjects. The fourth is his succumbing to irrational appetites: the fifth his yielding to anger; the last his giving way in the face of changing circumstances."'

[The Greek version from the Arabic is here jejune in comparison with the main Syriac version, which first gives a list of the six different things which damage a king—a list different from that in the Greek version—and then adds a list of the six different causes which bring him advantage. See *Kalilah and Dimnah*, an English translation of the Syriac version, by I. G. N. Keith Falconer, p. 22.]

(*c*) *A rebuke to intriguers who poison the minds of kings*

pp. 119–21. The lion, following the Machiavellian advice of Ichnelates, destroys his minister the ox. Hereupon the other jackal, Stephanites, gives Ichnelates a lecture and points the moral of his action. 'Look at the plot you have woven and the results to which it has led. You have shamed the lion, destroyed the ox, and scattered to the winds the spirit of concord in the army. Are you ignorant that the wisest of a king's counsellors will not allow him to begin hostilities when the issue can be settled by peaceful means, even if his enemies are the weaker side? Prudence is a stronger force than the hands of a multitude of men. . . . There is nothing so ruinous to men in authority as hearing and taking the advice of such men as you. True understanding is the crown of reason, and justice of eloquence; a cheerful spirit is the ornament of giving, and ripeness the crown of beauty of the soul; to give to the needy is the grace of riches, performance the grace of promise, and health and happiness the graces of life. I tell you, too, that in virtue of his knowledge the wise man is sober, and [for want of it] the unwise man is drunk. The foolish man is troubled as the eyes of the bat are in daylight; and the king who has a number of such subjects about him is like water that is clear and transparent, but full of crocodiles—any man who comes near to drink is destroyed, however thirsty he may be. You wanted nobody but yourself to be the lion's friend; but the strength of kingship lies in the number of its supporters, as that of the sea depends on the multitude of the waves, which are what make it dangerous to those who sail on it.

It is utter folly to be a surface friend, without observing the duties of friendship; it is foolish to seek advantage for oneself by doing injury to others. But I know that in giving you this advice I am trying to do the impossible; for it is as a wise man has said. "Seek not to convince a fool of his folly, lest he hate thee."'

Note. There are many other fables in *Stephanites and Ichnelates*, all on the general theme (as it is expressed in the title of an Italian translation of the Greek published in 1583) *del governo de' regni sotto morali essempi di animali ragionanti tra loro.* (There is a full discussion of various problems connected with the history of the Greek version in Evelyn Jamison's work, just published, on *Admiral Eugenius of Sicily*, especially pp. 8–21 and 249 ff.)

§ 8. THEOPHYLACT, ARCHBISHOP OF BULGARIA

Introduction

Theophylact was born in Euboea, and was one of the pupils of the Byzantine scholar Psellus. He was for a time the tutor of Constantine, the son of the emperor Michael VII (1071–8). He was afterwards made archbishop of Bulgaria, in 1078, and lived on into the twelfth century, under the dynasty of the Comneni. From his see he watched (and he describes in one of his letters) 'the passage or invasion of the Franks' during the First Crusade. He was unhappy in his exile from the life and culture of Constantinople; but he consoled himself by a voluminous correspondence with friends and acquaintances in the city—among them Nicephorus Bryennius, the husband of Anna Comnena—and with the writing of Biblical commentaries. He also wrote two orations or addresses which have some title to be remembered. The first and more notable, addressed to his pupil Constantine, begins with a panegyric of his father (Michael VII), and then passes into an exhortation to the son on the theme of *Institutio Regia* or the proper education of a king. This is an exercise on an old theme, which had been handled before by Agapetus (in the reign of Justinian) and more recently by the emperor Basil I (or by Photius writing in his name), and which was to be handled

afterwards by Nicephorus Blemmydes and Manuel II (1391–1425).[1] Theophylact shows little originality in his handling of the theme; but he shows evidence of reading in the Greek classics, from Plato and Polybius (and also Dio of Prusa) to Themistius and Synesius. The second address is a panegyric addressed (*circa* 1092) to the emperor Alexius Comnenus, which deserves notice for its argument that the state should encourage education (at any rate in the art of rhetoric), an argument afterwards pressed, with greater vigour and a wider scope, by Thomas Magister (see below, p. 161).

Theophylact of Bulgaria

A. *Institutio Regia* (*Paideia Basilikē*)

Addressed to his pupil the Crown Prince Constantine

The following passages are translated from the Second Part of the *Institutio*, which is in the form of a *parainesis* or exhortation addressed to his pupil the Crown Prince Constantine, on whose father and mother a panegyric is pronounced in the First Part (Migne, *Patrologia G.-L.*, cxxvi. 270 sqq.).

(*a*) *Tyranny and kingship.* In chapters 6 to 10 Theophylact discourses on the different types of constitution (following the traditional classification of Aristotle), and describes the defects of the tyrannical form. He defines kingship, in chapter 6, as a lawful and royal form of government which (as the supposed etymology of its name indicates) is the basis or foundation of a people;[2] and in chapter 11, after sketching the tyrant in dark colours, he paints a bright portrait of the king. The king is the opposite of the tyrant: in the very beginning and on the threshold of his reign the difference is already obvious: 'he does not acquire authority by force, or steep his robes in blood: his basis is the good will of the masses and the concurrence of the people, and with it his own moderation and mercy. He receives his crown as the reward of his virtue, and all men readily concede the best of things to the best of men.

[1] See above, pp. 54 and 62, and below, p. 151.

[2] The traditional view derived kingship (or *basileia*) from the two Greek words *basis* (or 'foundation') and *laos* (or 'people').

Even as among bees the king-bee[1] is naturally found, and the whole hive accepts him from the first as its leader, so the beginning of the reign of a human king is a time of graciousness and affability, not of black looks and harsh manners. And now let us go farther, and look into the nature of kingship.'

(*b*) *Religion the basis and foundation of kingship* (chapter 12). 'A true king, knowing that his throne should have a firm foundation, just as the substructure of a house or a church should be firm, makes religion his corner-stone. He cultivates it so much that he does not yield the primacy even to the clergy; for he acts and speaks, at all times, as one who surely knows that God sees and hears all things. Loving God, he is known as a man who is loved of God; for the man who loves God will be loved by Him. Wherefore God will be all in all to him—father and brother; soldier and fellow fighter, giving him victory in war and raising trophies by his side; a zealous fellow-labourer with him, in time of peace, at all things that make for good order. Who then has greater prosperity than the man who loves God? Who is more invincible in battle? What truce can bring greater peace [than he brings by his very nature]? Indeed a man of this stamp—but only such a man—may well be king of the whole world. For if the world is God's; if the man of whom I speak is agreed by all to be the friend of God; and if the goods of friends are their common property—it follows that the man who is dearest to God will be king [along with God who is his friend] of the whole world.'

(*c*) *The true test of a king's friends.* In chapters 13 to 18 Theophylact discourses on true friends and false flatterers. In the last of these chapters he seeks to find a criterion which will discover the true friends of the king. 'What is the test? . . . I will soon show you the stone which will serve to assay the true gold. There are three things we have to consider when we are seeking to find this test —first the man himself; then his family; and then the state (*polis*). Consider first the man, and see if he has so set his own character in order, that neither spirit nor desire [two Platonic terms of art], which ought to be servants and subjects, are allowed to be powerful and sovereign. Then, if you find the man himself such as he

[1] The queen-bee seems not to be known to Theophylact.

should be, you must go on to consider the way in which he manages his family and household; and if here too you find him of good report, raise him to another rung of the ladder, and entrust him with the management of the state. . . . Let this be your unfailing criterion in the choice of ministers; and let it be men who have been tested and tried in these particulars whom you promote to the management of the general affairs of the community. . . .'

(*d*) *The effect of the king's choice of friends and ministers on the behaviour of his subjects* (chapter 19). 'If the king's ministers are such as I have described, they will soon bring about an improvement of the realm by assimilating many others to themselves. The qualities which kings admire and cultivate grow generally under their patronage. If a king loves oratory, what a crowd of rhetoricians will assemble, and how the palace will be filled with their recitations! If he resolves to study philosophy, and to concern himself with mathematics, his gates will be beset by men who are brimming with Platonic lore; and even the gate-keepers themselves will know something about Archimedes and Euclid.'

The same point is pressed home, from another angle, in a later chapter (25). 'If the man who imitates a parrot and trills like a nightingale is to be honoured, while those who speak like men—or rather like gods—are to go about in dishonour, with no food to eat, but serving themselves as food for the fleas on their bodies; if the prizes are to go to arrogance and unseemliness, and virtue is to be left, as though it were a worthless thing, to become the prey of drought and decay—how, I ask you, will affairs go under these conditions? Is not the result plain to all, even if I say nothing about it?'

(*e*) *The king's use of the sword of justice.* In chapter 26 Theophylact has argued that the king must practise the virtue of clemency (*philanthrōpia*), as God, his archetype, does in heaven. In the following chapter (27) he adds a qualification. 'But let no one criticize my discourse or pull my words to pieces. I would not blunt the sword wholly. I know, Sire, that the scarlet shoes and robes which you wear are symbols of fire. Now fire has a double power: it illuminates, and it also burns, which means that it is both beneficent and severe. Do you, then, use the severity of ven-

geance, but use it as little as possible: shine constantly in illumination, but be slow to apply the cautery. This is the significance of the lamp which is carried in front of the emperor:[1] it is used for the one purpose of giving light, and not in order to burn men. I bid you too to shine, like it, in spreading abroad your good deeds.'

B. *Oratio in Alexium Comnenum*

An appeal to Alexius to support education in the art of rhetoric (*Patrologia Graeco-Latina*, cxxvi. 306)

At the end of this address Theophylact encourages Alexius to give his patronage to learning—learning of the rhetorical or 'sophistic' stamp which had already been encouraged by Vespasian in the first century A.D. Having augured all good things for his reign, he concludes with a prophecy and a prayer for the future of learning. 'The art of rhetoric too will benefit along with the general blessings brought by your accession. But I beg you also to give it your special and particular support; for it is now in danger not merely of being brought to its knees, but of being laid prostrate with its head on the ground. I cannot endure that my sovereign should appear to be less scholarly than the Hadrians and Antonines, who all supported the cause of rhetoric and oratory by grants from the public funds. I cannot endure that the judgement-seat of Themis should not award you the palm of victory over your predecessors in this matter. They restored a custom which had fallen into decay in the course of time, and reintroduced the habit of delivering speeches in the royal presence. Do you, Sire, add to the foundation they laid, and grant men the power of delivering speeches again with even more freedom and fire. . . .'

Note. A passage from the *Alexiad* of Anna Comnena (book v, c. ix) suggests that Alexius fulfilled, in some measure, the hopes of Theophylact (ed. A. Reifferscheid, i. 182). 'These things happened before my father was raised to the vantage-ground of the throne. But when he discovered the deficiencies of this empire in respect of all education (*paideia*), and how literature (*logos*) had fallen far short of the art of

[1] On the lamps, or torches, carried before the emperor (and the patriarch) see above, p. 106.

proper expression, he set himself to work. If there were any live embers of learning still concealed under the ashes, he busied himself in re-kindling them; and he ceased not to encourage in the pursuit of their studies such scholars as showed an inclination to learning (of whom there were a few left, though they were insignificant and only stood at the portals of Aristotelian scholarship), committing to them the duty of acting as pioneers in the study of the sacred books of Greek culture.'

PART V

THE PERIOD FROM THE LATIN CONQUEST OF CONSTANTINOPLE (1204) TO THE FALL OF THE CITY (1453)

THE LASCARIDS AND THE PALAEOLOGI

§ 1. NICEPHORUS BLEMMYDES

Introduction

Nicephorus Blemmydes, a scholar who eventually became a monk, was born at the end of the twelfth century and died in 1272. He left Constantinople after the Latin conquest of the city in 1204; and he spent the rest of his life mainly in the west of Asia Minor, where the Lascarid dynasty (Theodore I, John III Vatatzes, and Theodore II) maintained the form of the Byzantine Empire, with their capital at Nicaea. Here he received his education, and here he became a member of the clergy of the Greek Church, which had its headquarters in the city. He was appointed tutor to the crown prince Theodore (the future Theodore II, who also became a scholar and a writer); and in this way he came into connexion with the refugee Court. He was sent at one time by the emperor John III Vatatzes, the father of his pupil, on a tour of Mount Athos and other places to collect manuscripts and books; and he added to his scholarship in the course of his tour. In 1255 he was invited to become patriarch by Theodore II; but he preferred to follow the monastic vocation which he had embraced, and to devote himself to scholarship and writing. He has been called 'a great and ill-tempered savant who wrote a notable biography'.[1] Actually he wrote two autobiographical works (in the years 1264 and 1265) which attest the confident pride of that *irritabile genus*, the medieval Byzantine scholar. Like others of his

[1] J. C. S. Runciman, *Byzantine Civilisation*, pp. 246–7.

type and generation, he was a would-be polymath: he was both a poet and a philosopher, and his 'philosophy' embraced not only theology and logic, but also 'synoptic geography' and the theory of monarchy. He is perhaps more interesting as a character than as a writer: he was, as it were, a perverse Dr. Johnson, who acted as his own Boswell; he wrote his life as if he were writing the life of a saint, and he belaboured his antagonists in the process. Mixing energy with obstinacy and learning with pedantry, he lived a stormy life before he betook himself to a monastery; and even there he was perhaps a trial to his monks, though he united the practice of a liberal diet and the use of wine with the austerities which he enforced.[1]

His treatise on monarchy, addressed to his pupil Theodore Lascaris II (who reigned in Nicaea from 1254 to 1258), is entitled 'The Statue of a King' (in the Greek, *Andrias Basilikos*). Different views have been entertained of its value. One Russian writer regards it as having 'perfectly answered the needs and requirements of the Greek people of that time'; another, perhaps with more justice, regards the *Andrias Basilikos* as the representation of an 'abstract king . . . placed in a setting entirely isolated from life', adding that 'the misfortune of the medieval Greek was that he was weakened by classical reminiscences; . . . real life was veiled from him by books'.[2] There may be some characteristics of Theodore II portrayed in 'the Statue of a King'; but they are so faint as to be indiscoverable. It is curious to compare the *Andrias Basilikos* with the *Eikon Basilike* published in England, some four centuries later, in 1649. But the only ground of comparison is the title. 'The Statue of a King' is an abstraction: if it is a portrait, it is the portrait of a phantom. 'The Icon of a King' is the record of the actual doings, writings, meditations and prayers of Charles I from 1640 to 1649: it is, in the words of the sub-title, 'the portraicture of his sacred majesty in his solitudes and sufferings'. Its theme is not 'the idea of a king': it is the fate and the misfortunes of one particular king. There is a world of difference between the portrait of a

[1] G. Krumbacher, *Geschichte der Byzantinischen Litteratur*, p. 447.

[2] Quoted in A. A. Vasiliev, *History of the Byzantine Empire*, Eng. transl., pp. 551–2.

phantom drawn by Blemmydes and the portrait of a 'martyr' drawn by the author of the *Eikon Basilike*.

There is perhaps something of a Byzantine flavour about the titles *Eikon Basilike* and *Eikonoklastes* (the latter is the title of Milton's rejoinder); they remind one of the struggle between image-worshippers and image-breakers (iconoclasts) in the reign of Leo the Isaurian. The memory of that struggle may possibly have inspired Milton's title (he had read Byzantine writers, and he quotes the Byzantine historian Nicetas in the course of his argument). But the title of *Eikon Basilike* cannot be a reminiscence of the *Andrias Basilikos* of Blemmydes, which was not printed, so far as I know, till 1827. If Milton had known the *Andrias Basilikos*, he might have charged Bishop Gaudens (who was probably the author of the *Eikon Basilike*) with stealing the title of his book—just as he actually accused him of plagiarizing a prayer 'from the mouth of a heathen woman praying to a heathen God . . . in the vain amatorious poem of Sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia', and putting it into the mouth of Charles I as a Christian prayer. Gaudens would have had an answer, if Milton had challenged the title of his book: had not Sir Thomas Browne, in a work published three years before (in 1646), spoken of 'icons or cuts of martyrs', and why should he not do the same? But it is a 'curiosity of literature', if it is also an accident, that two such different books as the *Andrias Basilikos* and the *Eikon Basilike* should bear such similar titles.

Nicephorus Blemmydes on Kingship (circa A.D. 1250)

This treatise survives in two forms. The first and original form, written by Blemmydes himself, in a style which has been described as 'high-flown, ornate, and obscure', bears the title, 'A treatise sent to the King [the emperor Theodore Lascaris II] entitled the Statue of a King'. The second and later form is a revision, or paraphrase, 'intended for greater clarity', which was composed by a deacon in the church of St. Sophia, with the aid of a colleague, about the end of the thirteenth century, and bears the title, 'What manner of man the king should be'. The following passages are translated from this later form, which does not seriously differ in substance, but which certainly has a greater

clarity. The argument of the treatise does not add greatly to knowledge: its fourteen chapters are mainly a collection of commonplaces and moralizings; but it indicates the attitude of the clergy to monarchy in the last phase of Byzantine history. The text followed in the translation is that of A. Mai, *Scriptorum Veterum Nova Collectio*, 1827, ii. 609–70.

Cap. 1. *The king, as head and brain of the body politic, should receive contributions from those who have means and 'tributes' from scholars and writers.* 'There is an old-established law, which is in agreement with the requirements of affairs, that the king's servants should render him gifts; and this brings great advantage to his subjects, inasmuch as they are likely to do their bounden duty by making these gifts. The king, entrusted as he is with the government of all men, exercises forethought on their behalf; and therefore, as he has no private property of his own, it is right that he should draw on the common stock (thus making the possessions of all the members of the State common), to the end that he may thereby so order affairs that all men should have and hold their property securely, in mutual concord and co-operation —taking care at all times to keep themselves free from division and to be, as it were, one body. It is thus that even animals can triumph over difficulties, when all their limbs and members discharge their proper functions. So the king, being the head and brain of the whole body politic, has the right to receive contributions from all its members, as a means to their protection and preservation.

'From those who are in business, and making profits, it is proper and fitting that the king should take a share of their gains [in money]. From those who have eloquence and wisdom, it is proper and fitting that he should receive a good report, and enjoy the gift of praise, through their writings; and this is by so much the more precious, above all other contributions, as writing is more honourable than all the other arts. If, then, the king is loftier than all other men, and if philosophy is more precious than all the other arts, what can be more fitting for the king than the celebration of his praise in writings? Great things are fitting for those who are great, lofty things are the most proper of all things

for those who are lofty. Kingship bears the image and similitude of God, and philosophy bears the image of divine providence: wherefore kingship that does not love wisdom [*sophia*] is far from God, and so too the fruits of wisdom [i.e. the praises of philosophers] are becoming to the king.'

Cap. 2. *The definition of a king, and how he should shun pleasure.* 'It is first of all necessary to offer a definition of kingship. Kingship is the immovable foundation of a people,[1] a foundation not exhibiting, in hypocrisy and deceit, deeds which are contrary to its nature, and not contradicting in any way its own high name. How can the king be justly termed a basis and foundation [of his people] if he falls into irrational desires and is the victim of disorderly and unseemly passions? Instead of being a foundation, he becomes the author of confusion and hindrance; for he is by his nature a model, and as such he is followed by his subjects, who are compelled and naturally endeavour to imitate his ways.[2] So what befits a king is, first of all, that he should be king and master of himself, and, next to that, that he should be king of all his people; for how can a man who is not able to manage the one concern of his own household be truly called, with any justice, the autocrat [which literally means 'the self-ruler'] of cities and of peoples? [The writer then refers to the captives of Circe who were turned into dogs and swine, and recounts Homer's story of the healing herb called Moly, given by Hermes to Odysseus, which availed against her enchantments.[3]] What beseems a king above all is [to use] the rational remedy (which is like that given to Odysseus by Hermes) consisting in the wisdom of reason; a remedy potent against the unbridled force of pleasure, even as the herb called Moly was potent in the story. Nay, it also becomes a king to use the two-edged sword [with which Odysseus threatened and overcame Circe], the sword which, with the aid of wise counsel, divides the good from the bad. . . . Indeed it becomes the king not only to keep himself free and safeguarded from all pleasures, but

[1] The writer has in mind the usual etymology which identify *basileia* (the Greek word for kingship) with *basis-laou* (the basis or foundation of a people).

[2] On this doctrine of 'imitation' see above, pp. 127–8, 148.

[3] *The Odyssey*, book x.

also to liberate others, both by word and example, and to listen constantly to holy hymns. [The writer then cites the historical examples of temperance and self-control offered by Alexander of Macedon and Cyrus of Persia, and the contrary example of self-indulgence which was set by Sardanapalus. Finally he turns from history to the present.] But to leave the men of old, and to come to mention of more recent times, I will say this. What was it that gave our great city [Constantinople] as a prey to the Latins [in 1204], and filled the world with all manner of misfortunes? It was nothing but the culpable conduct of those who were then on the throne, and the slackness and cowardice which it bred. There is nothing that makes men so womanish as the irrational instinct and passion which impels them towards women.' Sex is thus the culprit, and the peril of kings. . . . The writer was a monk.

Cap. 3. *The king, as he should shun pleasure, shall also avoid anger.* 'Much finer, and of much greater benefit than the man who has shown himself an object of dread by the punishments he inflicts and the force he uses, is the man who is created and chosen as king, by common assent, for the goodness of his judgement and his understanding and virtue. For the king who is created and chosen by the common disposition and judgement is a king whom men love, and for whom they feel loyal fear; but the king who is fond of inflicting punishment is a king whom men are anxious to avoid.'

Cap. 4. *The king should show clemency.* 'Kings were called of old by the wise [i.e. Homer] "moderators" or "shepherds" of their peoples. And indeed the gift of "moderation" is what a man should specially possess, in a far greater degree than his fellows, when he is advanced to the honour of being an ornament of his people (as is a general in war), and of becoming, as it were, the front-rank leader and teacher of morals. So, too, the "shepherd" shows a special care for his sheep, leading them to good pastures, and giving them pleasure and joy by his piping and his songs; not binding them down in bonds, or vexing and oppressing them, or inflicting pain upon them, on any plea or excuse. . . . [The writer turns once more to historical instances, citing Sesostris of Egypt as an example to be avoided and Hiero of Syracuse as a model to

be followed; and he mentions particularly the first Christian emperor] . . . I pay my tribute to Constantine the Great, famous among all emperors, who instead of using in his edicts the words, "Our Majesty determines", preferred to say, "Our Serenity exhorts"; whereby he showed that a serene and gentle temper, which is specially proper to kings, adorns and distinguishes them more than the purple and the diadem. *Those* are things which even a tyrant may have; but serenity alone is the one inviolable and secure treasure of the dignity of kingship. This is why many of the kings of old showed the temper of philosophers by their words and deeds in the matter of this virtue; and not least among them the emperor Trajan, who succeeded to his [adoptive] father Nerva and nobly followed the example of the reign of his predecessors, . . . saying "The king ought to be like God, and to bear with such of his servants as offend'; wherefore he was deemed worthy by God to receive pardon, not only for his sins, but also for his unbelief—which is a great and wonderful thing.'[1]

A succession of chapters follows, in which the king is warned against avarice and vain glory (cc. 5 and 6); is exhorted to follow truth (c. 7), to drill the army (c. 8), not to neglect the study of naval warfare (c. 9), and not to procrastinate (c. 10); and, finally, is bidden to appoint good officials (c. 11), to foster the cause of religion (c. 12), and to keep himself in good repute (c. 13). The writer's style remains diffuse and even verbose: the morals are generally obvious, and even trite: the historical examples cover a wide range, but would seem to be drawn from ordinary handbooks. The following passages may serve as illustrations of the general argument.

(*a*) Cap. 6 *ad finem*. 'Why should I say more? If the king, in addition to his other qualities, has also the virtue of humility, he imitates Christ Himself, who is our true God. So the king who has been clothed with honour by Christ, and is therefore most God-like, has great joy in his heart whensoever he puts away things of shame that are alien and wholly foreign to him; as he

[1] This idea of the salvation of the 'good pagan' was a medieval tradition. The tradition about Trajan—that he was saved by the merits of the prayers of St. Gregory—is mentioned by Dante in the *Purgatorio*, x. 70–96.

is also filled with gladness and pleasure whensoever he shows forth in his acts the beauty of kingship. This I myself know from actual experience and from the course of affairs. If a king be after this pattern, he is a standard and type of all that is good, and he shines brighter than the famous statue of the sculptor Polyclitus [so that he will be indeed a 'statue of a king']. He has joy in two ways—first in the zealous doing of what is good, and next in hating and rejecting what is bad because it is alien and foreign.'

(*b*) Cap. 7 *ad initium*. 'Let the light of reason adorn the king, so that he is set forth as an example to all for the common well-being. Let truth be his finest ornament; for if the most high king be illuminated thereby, he will in turn become a manifest and conspicuous [light to his people], drawing and attracting all men to him, like a magnet, and bringing them after him by the truth [that is in him].'

(*c*) After urging, in c. 8, the necessity of military training and exercises (and decrying, in the process, games such as a species of ball-game on horseback which seems parallel to the Eastern *jerid*), he exhorts the king, in c. 9, to acquire a knowledge of naval warfare. 'I praise those Athenians of old who divided their time between debating (*logoi*), law-making, and fighting on land and sea. By their practice of debate they exercised both their minds and their tongues; by their law-making they practised the art of justice; [by their fighting] they guarded the cause of liberty, and adorned and glorified their city by many victories and triumphs [as at Marathon and Salamis, which the writer proceeds to describe].'

(*d*) Arguing for the need of appointing good officials, in c. 11, Blemmydes asks, 'What is the reason why in our times the study of letters and learning is rare, or even extinct, and the decency of morals destroyed? Is it not because those who follow the cause of goodness and letters are passed over and held of no account, while inferior men are picked out and preferred both for ecclesiastical office and even, too, for political?'

(*e*) The chief duty of the king, it is argued in c. 12, is to promote the cause of religion. 'The head and forefront of all the blessings which it befits the king to ensure is a continual regard for religion.

I mean that he should, with all his might and to the best of his power, maintain and preserve, unbroken and unchanged, the articles and rites laid down by the holy fathers in the matter of religion.' The examples of Hezekiah and the other pious kings and leaders of the people in the Old Testament are cited in evidence.

(*f*) The conclusion of the whole matter is stated in an epilogue, c. 14. 'This poor treatise, composed by me with great good will, offers these counsels to the king as one among the other tributes due to him. . . . If the king . . . accepts it, and if he also requires more and better offerings from more distinguished and abler writers, he has an indubitable right to place and keep it henceforward in the depth of his breast. . . . Then, treasuring in days to come riches which are worthy of his royal greatness, and using those riches imperially and in splendour, he ought to share them in a spirit of emulous liberality with all his subjects, so that good thereby may grow and abound and be transmitted from one man to another; all men regarding as their example and archetype a king thus adorned and enriched—a king who presents and manifests himself, in word and in deed, as one who has found the highest and truest felicity and the bliss which is laid up hereafter without end and for ever and ever.'

§ 2. GEORGIUS ACROPOLITES

Introduction

Born in Constantinople in 1217, Georgius Acropolites went in his youth to Nicaea (the centre of the Greek Empire and Church after the Latin capture of Constantinople in 1204) and studied there under Nicephorus Blemmydes. Entering the imperial service, he became Grand Logothete in 1244, and tutor (like his master Blemmydes) to the crown prince (afterwards Theodore II) about the year 1246. He served for a time as a general, but he served without success; and he was afterwards employed as a diplomat. In that capacity he helped to conduct the negotiations for the union of the Greek and Roman Churches at the Council of Lyons in 1274.

He wrote a history of events from the Latin conquest of Constantinople to its recovery by the first Palaeologus, Michael VIII, in 1261. He also wrote a funeral oration on the emperor John III (Vatatzes), who reigned in Nicaea from 1222 to 1254. The passage from that oration which follows throws light on the cultivation of learning at the court of the Lascarid dynasty, during the reigns both of John III and of his son and successor Theodore II.

A Funeral Oration on John III Ducas Vatatzes delivered in A.D. 1254

(Ed. A. Heisenberg, ii. 27)

On the duty of kings to study philosophy: cap. 20. 'It was not from riding or archery or other such exercises . . . that the emperor [John III] first set out on his way: those were things which he had long reckoned as toys, even if they were practised to the point of perfection. It was from lectures and books and the study of philosophy itself: it was from studies and the highest knowledge of the nature of being. When that happens, the truth of the old saying must needs be seen—the saying of one of the wise men of old—that states will have rest from their evils, and be compassed about with blessings, when kings become philosophers or philosophers become kings. In him both of these things were realized; he was a king, and he pursued philosophy to the heights; he sought to become a philosopher, and he became all the greater as king. Do you not see for yourselves that he was even more eminent than the Agamemnon of Homer, who is described as being like Zeus the Thunderer in his look and his countenance . . .? For myself I would not say that he was like a king among men: I would rather hesitate, in the manner of the Delphic priestess, whether to call him God or man. But the alternative that carries the day with me is to say that he had the nature, and bore the name, of a god. By his love of philosophy he showed himself godlike—as by his birth he showed himself a king, by his nature he showed himself strong, by his virtue he showed himself brave, and by his management of affairs he showed himself the best among us all.'

The language is that of adulation; and the adulation is con-

tinued, and even increased, in the final chapter (21) of the oration, which salutes the accession of Theodore II Lascaris, a monarch who, with many defects, was yet a writer of some notable letters and also of an oration on his contemporary the emperor Frederic II *stupor mundi*. Indeed the culture of the court of Nicaea, under both John Vatatzes and his son Theodore II, was a notable achievement; and the adulation of Georgius Acropolites (who, incidentally, had suffered an ignominious punishment from the rage of the son, though he had been his tutor and was at the time his minister) is not entirely undeserved. Philosophy *was* in honour with the emperors of Nicaea; and Acropolites (in c. 32 of his *History*) records a saying of John Vatatzes that 'a king and a philosopher stand alone in being the most notable of all men'.

(On the history and character of the Lascarid dynasty (1204–61) see Alice Gardner, *The Lascarids of Nicaea*.)

§ 3. THOMAS MAGISTER

Introduction

Thomas Magister, who also went by the monastic name of Theodulus, was a writer and an official in the reign of Andronicus II (1282–1328). He was thus a contemporary of Theodore Metochites. His writings consist of a school-book on 'Attic names and words'; of commentaries on the classical dramatists and a commentary on Synesius of Cyrene; and of letters and speeches. One of his speeches is an address of congratulation to Metochites, a fellow official and writer; but the most notable are two speeches, based on an old Greek model, which set out at length, for the benefit of the emperor and his subjects, a set of general ideas on their duties and obligations.[1]

Isocrates had written two speeches or treatises, in the fourth century B.C. The first, *Ad Nicoclem*, was an address to a Cypriot ruler of that name, advising him how a king should conduct himself to his subjects: the second, *Nicocles vel Cyprius*, though written

[1] It may be added that Thomas Magister lived for some time in Thessalonica, and wrote a treatise addressed to its people, 'On Concord' (*peri homonoias*), which would appear to have been concerned with the troubles in the city about the middle of the fourteenth century; see below, pp. 184 ff.

by Isocrates, professed to be addressed by Nicocles to his subjects, and dealt with the theme of the proper conduct of subjects to their rulers. The example of Isocrates (which had been followed again and again in the course of history as the model for addresses to monarchs) was followed at the end of the thirteenth century A.D. by Thomas Magister in two parallel addresses or orations. The first is entitled, in the Greek, *peri basileias*, and has been given by editors the Latin title *De Regis Officiis*: the second bears the Greek title *peri politeias*, and has been given the Latin title *De Subditorum Officiis*. The orations are printed in Mai's *Scriptorum Veterum Nova Collectio*, iii. 145–201. The passages from them here translated deal with the general theme of culture (*logoi*) and education (*paideia*): with the duty of the ruler to foster the development and transmission of the one, and the duty of the subject to give to his children the full benefit of the other. Many Byzantine emperors had been scholars and writers, and the writer of these speeches was following a fine tradition of the Byzantine Empire when he pleaded the cause of *literae humaniores*. It may be added that the reign of Andronicus II, during which he wrote his speeches, was a reign of cultural activity, if not of political success: and indeed the more Byzantium failed in the political sphere, the more it flourished in the sphere of culture.

It follows on what has just been said that the main and particular interest of the speeches of Thomas Magister lies not so much in concern with the political problems of 'kingship' and 'constitution' which the titles of the speeches suggest: it is rather to be found in their serious and earnest plea for the promotion of sound learning and a system of good education. It is with social rather than political issues that the writer of the speeches is essentially concerned. When he speaks of the duty of kings, he begins with the praise of wisdom and culture; he proceeds to exalt the importance of a knowledge of principles as compared with knowledge of rules of law; and he ends by proclaiming the duty of the State and its king to promote the cause of sound learning. Similarly, when he treats of the duties and obligations of subjects, he is far less concerned with matters political than with matters social and educational. The civic duties of which he speaks are the duty of all

men to honour wisdom and pay the price of its acquisition to the teachers who can impart it; the duty of parents to give their children a general education—an education in liberal arts as well as in the technique of a profession; the duty of all who have children to choose masters and teachers who have character, as well as knowledge, and who will therefore be able to exercise a good influence on the character of the children committed to their charge. He recognizes, indeed, the value of arts and crafts, and the obligation incumbent upon all ordinary citizens to follow an occupation and to employ their faculties in production; he also recognizes the duty of the citizen to practise the arts of war, as well as the arts of peace, and to qualify himself by training and some form of military service to play his part in the militia which the State needs for its defence. But his main concern is that all alike—the working class of artisans as well as the rich and leisured —should have access to a liberal education which will be a training of character as well as of intelligence, and will enable all to fulfil 'the whole duty of a Christian man'. Thomas Magister deserves his name; he tried to think and to write as a 'master of education'; and he represents one of the best and finest elements in the temper of Byzantinism, which always sought, throughout its course, and not least in its last stage, to cultivate a general *paideia* and to do homage to sound learning.

I. The First Oration: on the Duty of a King

(*a*) *The Praise of Wisdom and Culture:* c. xxv (Mai, p. 168)

'In this respect [i.e. in respect of what tends to the strength of kingship], the power of culture (*logoi*) appears, in some ways, to be of less importance. But if the truth be told, this, too, is so evident a necessity for those in authority, and indeed deserves their encouragement so much more than anything else which one could mention, that all other things are irrational ornaments if the gift of intelligence be not added. When it *is* added, the whole community is at its best, and possesses much greater worth, not only from the intrinsic charm which intelligence has in itself, but also from its alliance with culture, which is of all things the most

congenial to us and gives us in all ways the greatest pleasure. The pursuit of culture is natural to man, and to man only, in a unique degree. Any pleasure, Sire, which you select for mention in comparison with others—nay, I would even say in comparison with *all* the pleasures in the world rolled into one—you will find to be inferior to that which comes from culture, and, indeed, so much inferior as not to be able to bear any comparison with it. Why should this be so? The reason is that there is a real risk that all other pleasures may prove treacherous and deceptive: they may be wholly a snare to those who ensue them, and a threat both to soul and body. . . . But intelligence (*logos*), first of all, makes the soul instantly happier: it creates in it a new and admirable disposition: it surrounds the soul, in the words of Homer, with "a voice divine", so that it is full of a waveless calm, becoming gracious and gentle, and feeling an inspired and strange delight. And then, too, the man who refuses to allow the material and inferior elements of his nature (the elements which belong particularly to the part of the soul moved by affections of the senses) to be swept away by their instincts; the man who keeps them in hand and represses them, reducing them to harmony and order in obedience to virtue—such a man shows forth those elements at their best; he makes them, as it were, rational instead of irrational, by training them to be moved according to the dictates of reason and by keeping, as the saying goes, on "the right road". Giving the better and intelligent part of himself its natural superiority—preserving in every way that superiority, if it is present, and seeking to restore it, in the strength of the better part, if it be absent—he exhibits himself to himself as a notable and admirable example of what ought to be done, and what means should be used, to preserve all that he has gained, and thus to walk according to nature.'

(*b*) *Man draws near to God in virtue of knowledge and wisdom:* c. xxvi (Mai, pp. 168–9)

'In this way the chariot of which Plato wrote [in the *Phaedrus*]—the chariot which the soul is able to drive—is at its best; with the two horses not fighting, even if they pull against one another, but rather agreeing with one another and running the course in an

orderly way. And so I say that the man of wisdom, in so far as he is wise and has knowledge (*gnōsis*)—knowledge not only of the *things* that are, in so far as they are, but also concerning the conduct of *affairs*, both divine and human—will be reasonably called more of a man, and a man superior to others, in this our mortal sphere. For even as all other men are superior to irrational beings in virtue of their reason, so too he—though he counts among men in so far as he is regarded as just employing his reason—may none the less be said to exceed the measure of a man, in so far as he not only employs his reason but also practises wisdom (*sophia*); and thus he alone may be said to win "the vote of the men of Colophon"[1] in this world of our common nature—being, so to say, a mortal man who is like a god (which is what the word *phōs* signifies[2]). So it is that, the more wise he is, the more he partakes in this designation (*phōs*); and the more he partakes in this designation, the more he is removed from men and transformed into a god.'

'So being midway between both, he seems to me to be shy, as it were, of partaking wholly in the affections of the body. He studies philosophy as if he were set among bodiless beings; he cleanses the eye of his soul at all times; to whomsoever he speaks, and whatsoever he does, he trains his eye to be fit and ready for the vision of the divine, and prepares it to seek and find the primal being from which he has fallen. And then there is also something greater still; something worth everything else. Mortal though he is, he seems to be immortal, in virtue of the teaching and writing[3] (*logoi*) which he leaves behind him. Present still, as it were, among those that come after, he still consorts nobly with men and still keeps their company. Or rather, we may even say, he makes not only himself, but also others, immortal, instead of merely mortal. He makes himself such by what I have said; he makes others such by the teaching and writing whereby he brings

[1] The Greek word *colophon* (as a common noun) means 'the finishing touch'. Is the 'vote of Colophon' (where the word is a place-name) a sort of pun based on the meaning of the common noun, and does it mean the final or conclusive vote?

[2] There may be a pun here on the two senses of the word *phōs*, which, according as it is accented, may mean either a mortal man or a shining light.

[3] The word *logoi* has to be translated in different ways in different contexts. It is 'culture', and 'knowledge', and 'teaching', and 'writing', all rolled into one: it is *all* the manifestations of man's gift of *logos*—the Word which is Reason.

it to pass that their virtue and fame endure for ever; which virtue and fame, if they meet not with one who will keep them alive for those that come after, are instantly quenched and fade back into themselves, so that in a little while there is nothing to show that they have ever been.'

(*c*) *Knowledge greater than Law:* c. xxvii (Mai, p. 169)

'. . . We must therefore think of knowledge as the finest of all things among men, and we must regard everything else as falling within the province of this admirable and truly heaven-sent gift. If we all recognize law as a general benefactor, saviour, guardian of our lives, and so forth, because it does away with vice and fosters virtue, and because it makes men think that they ought to honour virtue and punish wrongdoers, ought we not in justice to offer our thanks first and foremost to knowledge, which is the inventor of law? Should we not, with much greater reason, give *it* these praises, and give it even more of them, inasmuch as it is the origin and cause of the happiness which law produces? Surely we must, if it be the case that no good would ever have been done unless laws had been enacted; if it be true that laws were originally enacted, and are still in the main upheld, by knowledge; if, finally, it be a fact that knowledge is the most peculiar, the most profitable, and the most valuable of all things to men—simply because, in addition to its other benefits, it lifts men above the stature of men. Knowledge always needs a colleague and leader such as you yourself, Sire, are, with all the power which your office gives you; a colleague and leader not only to protect it, but also to ensure that it has greater resources for attaining the fulfilment of its nature and the height of the estimation in which it ought to be held, and for serving the cause of men's common benefit.'

(*d*) *The duty of the State to Learning:* c. xxviii (Mai, p. 170)

'If this be the case, and if we should all agree with one another that it is, then, Sire, you would be justified—bound as you are by your office to exist and to act for the common advantage—in so cleaving to knowledge and learning, and in spending such pains for their advancement, as not only to command them to be cultivated

to the fullest possible extent in all places of your dominions, and not only to honour those who possess these gifts, but also, in your own person, to act as their champion and advocate. And if, with so many various affairs incumbent on you at noon-day, you cannot yourself pursue learning, or bend over books, or do other things such as involve the close attention that learning demands (for, as the proverb goes, "the man who has learned to ride cannot also be a singer"), you will, even so, be wise if you see to it that every city should, as I have just suggested, be a place where education (*paideia*) is busily pursued, and if you set a high value on the conversation and company of scholars; for there is a saying among the wise [actually, it is a line in a play of Euripides], "the presence of wise men make tyrants wise".

'Do you not think that in that way you would make learning more admired, and more worthy of every effort? If all men were persuaded that you took so much pleasure in learning, and set so much store by it, that you counted the companions of the Muses as your own companions, and if all men said to themselves that the bulk of affairs, in all the services, required to be handled by men of this type, then I feel sure that they would bid farewell to other pursuits and devote themselves to learning. They would consider any effort spent in the acquisition of learning as so much recreation; and in this way something like a theatre of the Muses —a festival of learning; a contest in the whole sphere of wisdom; a general rivalry [in scholarship]—would be, under God, established by virtue of your authority. You will thus become all the more admirable, in virtue of having achieved this marvellous consummation; a consummation which knows nothing of the satiety that attends pleasure; a consummation long kept back in obscurity, and allowed to fade into nothingness, by the ignorance of rulers who ought rather to have caused it to shine forth in splendour. You will have thought it your duty to come, like a torch, and kindle the flame: in addition to your other services, you will have thought it your duty to render men this new species of service to the best of your power. It is a noble act, Sire, and one that befits you.

'Here is some evidence for what I have said. The Athenians of

old erected the greatest and finest of all trophies for the victories which they had won, not only over all the barbarians, but also over all other Greeks: they were feared by all and ruled all Greece by land and sea; no man, in a word, could withstand them. All men looked on them as the common saviours: all took refuge with them from the rocks of adversity, because they, alone of all mankind, armed themselves with wisdom and a reasoned grip of affairs before they took up arms, and because they were men such as Homer describes,

Made to be speakers of words as well as doers of actions.

'Such action befitted [the record of] the Eleatic school, which was doubtless known among them:[1] it meant the simultaneous practice both of culture (*logoi*) and of arms. Not to mention Themistocles, Pericles, Miltiades, Cimon, and the other generals and orators [of Athens] . . . , and omitting the Pythagoreans who had long before brought happiness to Italy (which was also called Magna Graecia) by their statesmanship and their conduct of war, I would cite the example of the descendants of Aeneas. Who does not know that it was through being well furnished both with arts (*logoi*) and with arms that they attained such a height of fame, such strength and fortune and universal sovereignty, that they acquired empire over all the world? . . .'

II. *The Second Oration: on the Duties of Subjects*

(*a*) *The duty of citizens to practise arts and crafts:* c. vi (Mai, p. 178)

The writer argues that arts and crafts are not only a great and admirable way of gaining a livelihood, but also the firm foundation and the constituent elements of a good political order; and he accordingly concludes that every citizen, and all 'small persons' who are above the masses, should follow an occupation and be enrolled in the 'register'.[2] If this is done, men will be able to help

[1] Melissus, the last member of the Eleatic School (*circa* 440 B.C.), commanded the troops of Samos in a revolt against Athens, and defeated the Athenian troops under the command of Pericles before he was finally defeated himself.

[2] In ancient Athens the register (*catalogos*) was a list of those who were liable to military service. In medieval Constantinople it would appear to have been a list kept by the prefect (*eparchos*) of the city, who regulated and controlled the guilds of craftsmen and traders. See Vasiliev, *History of the Byzantine Empire*, Eng. trans., pp. 343–5.

one another and to contribute to public charges: if it be not done, and there is a mass of unemployment, crime will endanger order and sedition may threaten the State.

(*b*) *The duty of seeking and honouring wisdom and of paying its price:* c. vii (Mai, p. 179)

'But if arts and crafts thus matter, what matters most of all is a concern for wisdom and knowledge (*sophia*), which is not only, in itself, the head and forefront of all that is best for men, but also, in the sphere of moral virtue (the highest of all spheres), a guide and a companion on the path of duty. To be able to distinguish the best from the worst; to be able to see what ought to be thought and done; never to run outside the course set before us, but to wish always and at all times to please and satisfy all the best of our fellows; in a word, to understand (in the language of Plato), "what are the things which exist for ever, and have no coming and going, and what are the things which come and go, but never truly exist", and then to bid farewell to things transient, inasmuch as they are naught, and instead to seek and ensue by all means things transcendent, inasmuch as they truly exist; and thus, in brief, to endeavour to be a god in one's ways, which we hold to be the perfection of virtue—all this is a matter of wisdom and knowledge and the intelligent part of man's soul. If then we think that we ought to honour virtue and to rank it highest, because it is a true coadjutor with us in our relation to God, must we not in reason honour wisdom even more, because wisdom is the foundation of virtue? Wherefore, if we have regard for virtue, we must seek instantly to pursue wisdom, offering our substance for it and readily paying its price. . . . This is a payment that benefits, above all other payments, both those who give and those who receive. . . . There is nothing greater among men than to buy the felicity of wisdom at the price of a little silver. . . .'

(*c*) *The arts of war as well as those of peace should be cultivated:* c. viii (Mai, p. 180)

'Those who practise arts and crafts should be of good repute on other grounds also [as well as on the ground of their skill]. They

should not be half-servants of the State: their citizenship should not be limited to the works of peace; they should also have in their minds a spirit of gallantry and readiness for war. This, inasmuch as our life is divided between the duties of peace and those of war, is a side of our nature which ought not to be neglected. Plato accordingly requires of women that, like hen-birds protecting their young, they should stand fast in defence of their children, bearing arms and taking their place in the ranks—as we see the Scythians doing today. For this reason I would have every craftsman possess arms of every sort; and while he pays the closest attention at all times to his ordinary duties, with no relaxation of his efforts, I would also have him, in his times of leisure, practise the use of arms and train himself also for battle. . . . In addition to the State's army, this [militia] too should have credit, and serve the State as a protecting shield. Conversely, I would also require that such of the regular soldiers as are not of the first order . . . should possess some knowledge of an art or craft [partly because such knowledge may help them in an emergency during a campaign, and partly because it may serve them in captivity if they become prisoners of war].'

(*d*) *The duty of parents to educate their children:* c. xxiv (Mai, p. 195)

'I must now draw attention to a duty which it behoves every citizen to fulfil above all others. There are some men who seem to me really to do what good fathers ought to do, and that is to love their sons more than themselves, and to cherish them more than they cherish their own lives. But when a father thinks that he ought to give everything to his sons except what they most of all need [i.e. a good education], he seems to me not only to be guilty of giving them only half the care which they ought to be given: he seems not even to know how to love his children at all as he ought to do, depriving them as he does of the greatest and best of gifts—a gift which human nature particularly requires. [Fathers do everything to leave their children a material fortune]; but as for making them partners in education and culture (*paideia* and *logoi*)—as for helping them, with all their power, to acquire the finest and noblest of all possessions, which would enable them

permanently to keep and increase all their other belongings, to rise above themselves and their fathers in their own personal qualities, and to help their friends and serve their country when opportunity offers—to all this they pay no heed whatsoever. . . . Yet the man who has knowledge will have all these things added to him; and, even if they are not added, he will live nobly and highmindedly all his days.'

(*e*) *The need of an education in liberal arts as well as for a profession:* c. xxv (Mai, p. 196)

'So I bid both rich and poor not to place their sons in any profession or occupation before they have had them educated in holy scriptures (in the Greek *grammata hiera*) to the age of puberty—or only a little short of it. I bid parents to order and dispose the *minds* of their children, if they are well endowed by nature and thus offer great hopes of progress in learning; I bid them, if that is the case, not only to allow their children to follow the way of mental growth to the very end, but also to work by their children's side and co-operate with them as long as possible, running the race along with them in every way that they can. Children will be a great blessing to the life of man when natural ability and industry, and the qualities likely to follow on both, all meet and work together. If things cannot be carried so far [i.e. 'to the very end'], the question of a profession already arises [i.e. it arises at an earlier age]; and the object then is that being doubly equipped—first by having been trained through learning and education, and next by knowing well how to provide themselves with the means of livelihood —children may live their lives in the best way possible and as they ought. This will be especially ensured if after being occupied by their profession they occupy still themselves with the study of books.[1]. . . If the Athenians, with the object of attaining naval supremacy, taught their children seamanship before anything else, much more should we—who are fellow sharers with Christ and who bear this great and admirable name [the name of

1 This seems to be a suggestion of 'adult education' or 'continued education'—in other words education which is still pursued after leaving school and entering upon an occupation.

Christian]—acknowledge it as our bounden duty . . . to count the things that belong to our calling as of greater importance than anything else, and to teach these things to our children before we teach them anything else. . . .'

(*f*) *The choice of masters and teachers, who must be of good character as well as good ability:* c. xxvi (Mai, pp. 197–8)

'Moreover, and above all, you must be careful not to fall into the error of entrusting your children to the wrong sort of teachers. If you are anxious that your children should do their best in knowledge and character, and should be of service to themselves and others, their teachers must not be men who are good at teaching but otherwise defective and of poor character, nor, again, must they be men who are honest and well-conducted but who do badly by their young charges for want of knowledge. They must be men who have both a store of knowledge and a character that corresponds to it. No other course is possible; and you may well recognize that this course is in the interest of yourselves and of the teachers themselves, as well as in that of the children, if you take to heart the consideration that follows.

'If the first of all lessons to be learned is the meaning of the Two Ways of life (or in other words the premises and preparations either for virtue or for vice according to the path that is followed); and if the minds of the young are so malleable and so susceptible of any impression—mainly because, like wax, they can be more readily moulded in virtue of their tender years, but also, and not least, because they have not as yet been stamped with either of those two opposite dies—if, I say, they are so malleable and susceptible that they will at once receive and retain the whole of an impression, then it clearly follows that if you bring them into contact with what is good you may expect them to be correspondingly good, and of such a nature as to do you credit. If, however, this is not done, you must blame yourself for the omission, and you will pay the penalty for not having put your children in the charge of men who can mould them properly. When your child and you have the power of attaining the best results, and of laying the foundations of a magnanimous spirit by the means I have

mentioned, will you not choose those means? Plato forbids nurses to tell children any story that comes into their heads (indeed he lays it down that nurses must be Greeks and not barbarians), in order that they should not become acquainted, in their earliest years, with low and mean themes. Surely, then, it would be a very strange thing if men entrusted their children to the care of masters who were not what they should be! . . .'

§ 4. THEODORE METOCHITES

Introduction

Theodore Metochites, like many other Byzantines in the epoch of the Palaeologi—including some of the Emperors themselves (notably Manuel II)—mixed politics with literature. He served under the emperor Andronicus II from 1290 onwards, attaining the dignity of Grand Logothete, and was a member of a literary circle which included, among others, Thomas Magister. On the death of Andronicus in 1328 he retired into a monastery in Constantinople, and died there in 1332. He was described by the historian Nicephorus Gregoras, who had sat at his feet, as 'a living library'; but a warm admiration for his master's learning does not prevent the pupil from censuring the turgidity of his style. Metochites was indeed diffuse and verbose. He took more words to make a point (and the 'point' was not seldom a commonplace) than any other Byzantine writer; and his editor says of him, with no little justice, 'orationis copia ita saepe effunditur, ac potius diffunditur, . . . ut inanium verborum strepitu sententiarum vis magis obscuretur quam illustretur'.[1] He was a voluminous essayist on a large variety of topics; and he was also a prolific versifier who wrote nearly 10,000 lines of hexameter verse. How he managed to combine such a flood of literature with the daily business of politics is something of a problem; but we learn from Gregoras that after a full day in his office he spent the night in his study.

His main memorial is his *Miscellanea*, or *Hypomnēmatismoi*. They

[1] T. Kiessling, in the preface, p. vi, of the edition of the *Miscellanea* of Metochites by C. G. Müller and T. Kiessling.

contain over 100 essays on various themes of philosophy, literature, history, and politics. The essays are full of learning: they are also full, even to overflowing, of long and involved periods. Nearly a third of the essays handle themes of history and politics. There are, for example, essays on democracy, aristocracy, and monarchy: there are essays on the constitutions of Athens and Sparta, and on Carthage and Rome: there are essays on the despotic governments of Asia, on the principles of taxation, on the value of the study of history, and on the relation between political speculation and political action. The basis of the essays of Metochites is, in the main, the ancient history and the classical writers of Greece: he quotes some 70 of these, and he makes particular use of the writings of Synesius of Cyrene. Three of the essays deserve some notice, and some passages from them are here translated. The first passage comes from the end of the essay on democracy, and is notable as containing a criticism of the contemporary government of Genoa, and as thus departing from the antiquarian classicism which is the general note of his writings. The second passage, or set of passages, comes from the essay on the old and well-worn theme 'Of Kingship'; and we may trace in it arguments and the use of analogies (for example the analogy of music) which had already been used by neo-Pythagorean writers a thousand years before. The third set of passages is drawn from an essay entitled 'On the Greeks—how they were not illustrious for the magnitude of their achievements and fortune in their early history, but rather for the ingenuity of their disposition and the nobility of their temper'; and it is of some interest as showing how a Greek (or, as he would have called himself, a 'Romaic') of the fourteenth century A.D. interpreted the history of the Greece of classical antiquity.

(*a*) *On Democracy*

(From the edition of the *Miscellanea* by C. G. Müller and T. Kiessling)

(pp. 616–17.) 'The defects of democracy can not only be illustrated by a mass of evidence from ancient history: we can also find a number of modern instances. There are many cities of Italy now living under democratic governments which suffer from the

diseases that, as I have argued, attend on such constitutions. No small measure of confirmation and proof is afforded at the present time by the city of Genoa, which is vexed by sedition, and internally divided, in consequence of the defects of its civic body. It is exposed to extreme danger, which threatens it with utter destruction and decay beyond the reach of all medical skill and power—and that though it may almost be called the city of greatest reputation in all the world, flourishing as it is in wealth and possessions and in spirit and martial energy, and wielding such power at sea as I know not if any other city of the present day can exercise. It has to its credit astonishing victories over its enemies, which can challenge comparison with those of antiquity; but it is none the less in evil case owing to its extreme system of democracy and to the irrational, illimitable, and inopportune spirit of self-seeking and cult of liberty which reigns among all its members. The conduct of public affairs shows itself at its worst in consequence of the spirit of greed ingrained in all the citizens, their unbridled ambition and contentiousness, and their thoughtlessness and heedlessness of all the requirements of the common weal. But they also suffer individually, and in their private lives, to a disgraceful and dangerous degree—the good at the hands of the bad; those who are eminent from those who are of no standing; and those who are sage and dexterous in all things from those who are utterly ignorant of all matters whether public or private. They have neither associations with one another—those sure covenants and compacts that unite men by general human bonds —nor any with their neighbours, or with any other communities [e.g. the Byzantine empire] with which they have common dealings and some occasion for intercourse and co-operation.'

Note. The argument is vague and verbose, and the author reflects a Byzantine bias against Genoa as a commercial rival. The 'democracy' of Genoa seems to be a figment of his imagination. Genoa was, indeed, a republic, but power lay in the hands of a number of noble families, such as the Dorias and the Grimaldi, who owned estates in the neighbourhood of the city or in its overseas possessions. It was not until 1340, after the death of Metochites, that the office of Doge was created and the nobles were excluded from it; but even after that date the nobles

remained in possession of authority as owners of the Bank of St. George, which was the greatest power in the city.

(*b*) *On Monarchy*

1. *Monarchy the best constitution* (pp. 625–6). 'The best constitution is a monarchy, under a king; a monarchy governing according to law, and exercising a paternal authority which is also an authority to issue commands and is subject to no responsibility. There is good hope here for a life of happiness and the participation of all the members in a proper degree of independence, . . . since it is far easier to find a single person well endowed with judgement and character, and at the same time well equipped with experience and the drill and discipline of life, than it is to find a number who are all of the same admirable character. Moreover, under a single person, the divine laws of our Christian religion, which includes in its perfect wisdom both things divine and things human, will also best keep their place and their effective power; . . . so too will the teachings of men of wisdom, both of the past and the present, teachings which rest on a comprehensive view of human affairs, which distribute and assign their different rights to all matters and persons, and which, by the will of God, receive honour and attention more readily when one man is in control than they do when the many rule.'

2. *The gains of subjects under a Monarchy* (ibid., p. 627). 'Moreover, as concerns the subjects of a monarchy, they can obey a single person more easily than they can a number: they will by his means, I hold, have some one standard of judgement and conduct in consonance with which they can guide and steer their action. This is something they could no longer do if they had many rulers. They could not in that case be moulded into the likeness of the many: they could not share their numerous and various attributes (attributes that may well differ from one man to another in view of the different types and characters of men's minds); they could not receive all the different dyes, colours, and designs of their various ways of life. . . . With a king it is different (p. 630): he sits on high as a judge of good actions like an umpire at the games, and he awards the prizes due to such actions.'

3. *Monarchy and the social hierarchy* (ibid., p. 628). 'There is a further point. The better class of men, and those who are outstanding in any respect, can never have any advantage from their preeminence, unless there be a man to preside over them and to judge them duly, and thus to make a right use of the qualities of each as circumstances may require. When the life, the progress, and the claims of each man go unregarded—left loose, so to say, and untested—for want of any system of supervisory justice which measures the contributions of each and weighs his endowment of judgement and experience, the consequences will as a rule be irrational; there will be no sure examination of claims, or exercise of judgement; on the contrary, as the poet says,

The good and the bad alike will be ranked in one equal honour.

(Ibid., p. 632.) 'This is the case with commonwealths (*koinopoliteiai*), where the worst of all things is held to be the best—to wit, a total equality of all the members in all matters, with no preeminence in honour as between one man and another, and with no preference of those who are absolutely best to those who are absolutely worst alike in judgement, conduct, character, and on all other grounds of distinction in life. In countries and cities which are not governed by kings the same honour is given to cobbler and brass-founder, porter and builder and shipwright, and all who follow mechanical arts and are of the type of Cleon and Hyperbolus, . . . as is given to the best of men—to men who are of the type of Themistocles, Pericles, Nicias, Epaminondas and Pelopidas, and others of that stamp; men who are of great help in the management of affairs, and whose services ought to be bought at a price, if that were possible, for the length of the days of their lives. But under the monarchical government of a king who is a good man and worthy of his office there is room for these qualities; and here great honour is actually paid to those who possess them. . . . The man who deserves more will get more, and he who deserves less will get less: there will be standards of repute and distinction, with tests and awards which assign to each man whatever is due and proper; for there can be nothing in the world more contrary to justice and harmony than equality of all things in life,

with all men alike and all receiving like honour, and with no diversity and variety among them.'[1]

4. *A good State is like good music* (ibid., p. 633). 'The analogy of music is in point. There cannot be harmony among musical instruments, nor can they blend in a symphony and concordance of tune, if all the notes of the strings are identical, with an equal pitch, a unison of sound, and a similarity of time. Similarly (p. 634), in our human world, there cannot be any harmony of a common life or any symphony of association, nor can there be any polity of a rhythmical and musical order, unless there is a reasonable distinction between the different parts and a separation of the different degrees which go with different dispositions. The political system, or, as you may also call it, the constitution or compact, is really a harmony: it is composed of parts which are different in kind; and [on that basis] it is composed, ordered, and concentrated into a unity. A polity, too [like a musical composition], is viewed and defined, by students of philosophy and experts in that subject, as a form of unity in virtue of its being constituted by many different members through the bond of their association; but they do not regard it as being one in virtue of the likeness and identity [of its members]. . . .'[2]

5. *The analogy between man's mind and the State, and the diseases to which both are liable* (ibid., pp. 635 ff.). 'The intellect [*nous*] is the king of man's mind, disposing with an absolute sway [in the Greek, 'like an *autocratōr*', the regular title of Byzantine emperors] all its motions within fixed limits to suit the needs of every occasion; and our minds are diseased if their king is deposed by the mob-rule of other and lower elements. The same is true of the State: it too (p. 636) becomes diseased and perverted if the noble intelligence of the monarch is dethroned by an insurrection of the mob. . . . Moreover (p. 637) it is also a disease of the State, and the worst of all diseases, when the single person at the head of the government, abandoning his office as a lawful and royal leader,

[1] The whole of this passage may remind the reader of Ulysses' speech on 'degree' in *Troilus and Cressida* (Act I, Scene iii), a speech based on the argument at the beginning of Sir Thomas Elyot's *Book of the Governor*.

[2] On this musical analogy see above, p. 67.

and girding himself with irresponsible power, turns tyrant and acts with insolent arrogance; when, paying no heed to the laws of God or man, but frenzied by irrational impulses, he tramples like a drunkard on his subjects, making his will their law, and requiring respect for all his opinions; . . . playing the fool with the foolish and practising debauchery with the debauched (p. 638)—in a word, taking no account of anything but his own inclinations, wise or foolish, just or unjust. . . . These (p. 639)—and many others like these, or even worse, which have not been mentioned—are the symptoms of the perversion of monarchy; and such as these are the diseases to which it is liable, . . . insomuch that, as Plato wrote, there can never be anything which brings greater happiness than does a city or country under royal government, or anything which means greater misery than a city or country which is governed by a tyrant. . . . But (p. 640) kingship is not to be blamed or abandoned because it may suffer perversion (all good things may suffer in the same way). . . . Alexander (p. 641) and Augustus and Titus and Marcus Aurelius, like our own Constantine and Theodosius (who along with their other human and royal titles to fame were the leaders and champions of religion), . . . show admirably the benefits of the monarchy of a king and its great advantages for the life of man. And another proof of the supreme value of lawful royal authority, when a good man is in control of affairs, is furnished by Caligula and Nero and Domitian and their like . . . men who were at once their own ruin and the ruin of those who had the misfortune to suffer from their tyrannical government.'

(*c*) *On the Greeks*

(A review of their merits and defects in the course of their history)

1. *A general view* (pp. 757–8). 'The history of the Greeks seems to me to show from the first, and that in a high degree, the qualities of a noble disposition and an ingenious nature. They are well reported among all men, and in all the world, for these qualities; . . . but they do not differ much from many other peoples in the magnitude of their achievements and the extent of their power. . . .

'A cause of their nobility of character and natural dexterity

may perhaps be found, among other factors, in the fact that the country they inhabit is in the middle of the world, and actually midway both between East and West and between North and South. It can hardly be wholly beyond reason that the inhabitants of such a country should have a better blending and composition than other men, and should enjoy greater opportunities of well-being: they entirely escape the excesses [from which peoples living in more extreme climates suffer]. . . .

(pp. 759–60.) Thus the Greeks excel some peoples in courage, and show more spirit and vigour, as they also, on the other hand, fall short of some others in these qualities. They have not the frivolity and effeminacy which characterize some peoples; but they are also free from the savagery and obstinacy of others, inclining rather to a pliable temper and the influence of gentle feelings. They have more sagacity and are quicker-witted than some other peoples are, and far more versatile in their designs, but they are also inferior to some peoples in these respects: indeed they even seem to be childish in comparison, and to need education for their improvement—which seems to me to be the reason for the old saying of the Egyptians about them [the saying of the Egyptian priests which comes in the *Laws* of Plato], 'the Greeks are for ever children'. . . . Then, too, they tend to speak more critically than some peoples do, in a loftier tone and with greater spirit and confidence; but they also speak with more moderation than some others do. In a word, they generally vary [from other peoples] in their whole disposition and all the forms of their endowment. . . .

(pp. 760–1.) 'In regard to the second point that I made—that no great and glorious achievement has come from the Greeks, and that no vigour of force and authority was contributed by them to the world in their earliest days, or has since proceeded from them, during the course of human history, in triumph and in glory and in splendour of fame—I can think of no other cause for this than their political division. The Greeks, in former ages, lived in separate units, and each of these units went its own way in isolation, with its own polity and character: they never, at any time, attained to any cohesion which might give them

prosperity and power. This was the reason why their fortunes were always humble: they had the one merit of good laws in their domestic affairs; but they never advanced any farther in the temper of their spirit or exerted themselves to the utmost; they were content to do one thing well, and that without annoying or having to fear the peoples who from time to time held sway in the world—they simply sought to keep themselves free from subjection, and to preserve their ancient inheritance of liberty.

2. *The Greeks and the sea* (pp. 761–3). 'Moreover, nearly the whole of the Greek race lived by the sea: they sought, it would seem, to shun and escape any threat which might be offered to them from time to time by different powers: they trusted the sea more than the land. (In former days and in olden times, men did not take to the sea—particularly the peoples who then had the greatest power by land—nor did they, as a rule, make any attempt at seafaring: indeed we may lay it down generally that it was a long time before men paid much attention to the use of the sea, or thought of maritime warfare or encounters at sea.) This, as I have said, was the reason why the Greeks clung to the sea. [They did so, however, with discretion.] On the one hand they were hardly coast-dwellers: they settled a little inland, and at some distance from the thunders of the sea: they kept aloof from occupations and labours on its waters; they never turned their eyes to harbours, or made any use of the sea, or even dipped hand or finger in it. On the other hand it has also to be said that in one way or another, and somehow or other, they lived only a short distance away from the sea—it might be a furlong or two: they all stayed as close to it as they could, and in any case they were never very far away. Under these conditions they either lived on the parts of the mainland which were washed by the sea, or they took to the pieces and fragments of the land that lay in the sea: they made the sea inhabitable by men, reclaiming the islands in it from their original desolation and making them useful to man by crossing over it to them. It was they who populated almost all the islands, tilled them and made them fit for human habitation, and brought them within the area of civilization.'

[The writer proceeds to recite the names of Crete and Lesbos

and other islands of the Aegean, and he adds to his list Sicily and Cyprus and other large and remote islands.] 'In these islands they erected a great number of Greek cities, which were inhabited under Greek law, and were never, in times of old, assailed by any other peoples or by any of the barbarians, with the one exception that some of these peoples, acquiring power and becoming aggressive, sought eventually to impose their yoke, and settled on some of the islands by the side of the Greeks. Originally, however, all the islands supported a population which was exclusively Greek; they belonged, in a word, to the Greeks; and it would thus appear that if ever at any time the Greeks attained any degree of power in the world, the reason was that in ancient times they made the whole of the sea their domain—they busied themselves on it, above all other peoples, at a time when only a few others took to it (and that only for reasons of trade), and they had it entirely under their control. [Thus the Greeks 'ruled the waves', but it was all on a small scale]: they inhabited, as a rule, small islands, and here they built Greek cities, many of them as close and contiguous to one another as country villages are on the mainland. The greatest of all the Greek cities, if not the most, were to be found scattered up and down the islands, according to the habit originally followed by the Greeks; for it was their custom then to live in separate units, with each section managing its life under its own particular set of laws, and they always liked, more than any other people, to distribute themselves in a number of cities.'

3. *The free commonwealth* (koinopoliteiai) *of the Greeks* (pp. 763 ff.). 'This leads me to the reflection that we may expect, as we actually observe, a greater density of settlement—indeed a much greater density than can be found anywhere else—among the cities and countries which have chosen, either in the past or the present, to live a common life under a system of commonwealths, and not under a despotic government. This, as I have said, was the reason why, in the old times when the sea was the domain and home of the Greeks, it was always the small and inconsiderable islands—the islands closest to, and almost continuous with, one another—which, contrary to all expectation, had the largest cities.' The author goes on to argue that these were the

times when the Greeks were in control of the sea, practised maritime arts, and preferred, 'as Thucydides says', the simplicity and ease of a maritime empire to the subtleties and refinements of a later age. He describes the early 'thalassocracy' of Minos, when, in the words of the proverb, 'Crete ruled the waves': he speaks of the maritime power of the Rhodians: he tells of the far-flung naval empire of Athens (pp. 764–6).

4. *The constitutional development of Greece* (pp. 766–8). 'But the whole history of the Greeks was compassed and confined within a narrow and limited circle of fortune: nothing of any magnitude came from them or proceeded in triumph from them over the world: their one contribution was an ingenious nature and judgement, coupled with nobility of disposition. For the rest, their success was small; and the reason was that they lived dispersed in small units, each on the basis and according to the circumstances of its own soil and culture, and all without the strength of any unity of government. At first each of their cities was under some form of monarchical government. . . . Afterwards, however, towards the end of their development, all the Greeks changed their constitutions, and all became commonwealths, some of one type and some of another, and either on the basis of oligarchy or on that of democracy. But some of their states, in the course of time, fell into disorder and became the prey of sedition among their members. This led them to succumb to the rule of absolute and tyrannical monarchs, and they fell upon evil days; but unable to endure such a fate, and inspired by the temper and courage of generous citizens, they restored their old constitutions and threw off the yoke of their tyrants, returning to their old concord (*homonoia*) under the pressure of necessity and for love of liberty.' The writer ends his essay by praising Athens and Corinth, both for their resistance to their own domestic tyrants and for the unremitting war which they waged against all forms of tyranny in the other cities of Greece.

§ 5. THE SOCIAL-REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT OF THE ZEALOTS OF THESSALONICA (*circa* 1342–50)

Introduction

Thessalonica was, next to Constantinople, the greatest city of the Byzantine Empire in the fourteenth century. Its population was reckoned at 40,000: it was a busy port; and it was also a centre of culture. As early as the end of the twelfth century its archbishop Eustathius had been a notable commentator on the poems of Homer and Pindar: in the fifteenth century it was for a time the home of Thomas Magister (see above, p. 161), the abode of many other scholars, and the centre of a lively discussion in which the ideas of philosophers and the classical tradition of ancient Greece were pitted against the monastic cult of mystical contemplation and the lore of the *omphalopsychoi*.[1] It was also a home of social cleavage, with wealth (both commercial and agricultural) confronted by the poverty of the sailors and dock-hands on the quays and the misery of the agricultural labourers in the adjacent countryside. It had some of the characteristics of an ancient Greek city-state; and the *stasis* which raged in its streets from 1342 to 1350 is not unlike the outbreaks of sedition which had vexed the city-states of ancient Greece. It is not surprising that here, 'for the first time in Byzantine history, a social-revolutionary movement exploded in the rising of the Zealots'.[2]

About the middle of the fourteenth century Thessalonica was troubled by three different forms of division which crossed and intertwined. One of these was a political division, between the cause of the pretender John Cantacuzene, supported by the richer classes and the monastic interest, and that of the young emperor John V (a minor in his teens) and the dowager empress Anne. This was in the nature of a civil war, in which the imperial crown —the object of Cantacuzene's ambition—was the issue at stake; and on that issue the people of Thessalonica espoused the side of

[1] Barlaam, their opponent, applied this name to the monks who practised contemplation, and sought the inner light, by resting their chin on their breasts and fixing their eyes on the centre of their body 'with all the force of their soul'.

[2] G. Ostrogorsky, *Geschichte des Byzantinischen Staats*, p. 368.

legitimism and supported the claims of the young emperor in Constantinople—the more as the strength of Cantacuzene lay in Thessaly and its neighbourhood, and was a close and immediate threat to their ideas of liberty. The second form of division turned on a religious issue: it was a division which opposed the 'hesychasts' or 'Palamites' (the votaries of *hēsychia*, or the peace of contemplation, under the leadership of Gregorius Palamas) to the thinkers and writers who preferred to pursue the study of philosophy and cherished the inheritance of ancient Greece. Prominent among these thinkers and writers was a Calabrian monk named Barlaam, who had visited Thessalonica (about 1330–1) and opened a school for the teaching of Greek philosophy, in which he lectured on the logic of Aristotle and the philosophy of Plato. 'Seeking', as one of the archbishops of Thessalonica said, 'to persuade all men to abandon *hēsychia* and to turn their minds to the philosophers of Greece', Barlaam became the chief figure of the opposition to the 'Palamites' and the head of a rival party of 'Barlaamites.'[1] This second or religious division was crossed and connected with the first or political division, in so far as the hesychasts or Palamites relied on the countenance and patronage of John Cantacuzene, while the *philosophes* or Barlaamites (initially at any rate) tended to be sympathetic to the young emperor John V and his supporters in Constantinople. The third division was social, and in the nature of a class struggle: it was a division between *ploutos* and *penia*, the party of the rich and the party of the poor; and this division, in the course of its development, connected itself with both the other divisions, the religious as well as the political. The Zealots, as the party of the poor came to be called, were naturally opposed to the political party of Cantacuzene, supported as it was by the richer classes and the wealthy monastic interest: they were also opposed to the religious party of the hesychasts, not only because it had the support of Cantacuzene, but also because it represented the cause of monastic

[1] In a synodical document, quoted in O. Tafrali, *Thessalonique au quatorzième Siècle*, p. 184, n. 3, the Barlaamites are denounced as 'in danger of falling into complete atheism, and foisting Greek mythology and idolatry on the pure and innocent faith of Christians'. This is parallel to what Plethon actually did in the next century (see below, pp. 216–17).

property, which they desired to curtail and to use for their own social objects—the relief of the poor and the general benefit of their city. Moreover there is some reason for thinking that the Zealots enjoyed the support—perhaps only an academic support—of the literary and philosophical opponents of the hesychasts, who were perhaps not unwilling to see their opponents the monks despoiled of their property, and who may have cherished some notions of social justice derived from their study of Greek philosophy. But that is at best conjecture, if not an improbable conjecture.[1]

The activity of the Zealots—the social Zealots, as they may more properly be called, because there were also Zealots (religious Zealots) on the other side, and there was thus a clash of two 'zeals'—became an active force about the year 1342. Like their forerunners in ancient Greece, they stood for the cause of social equality; and if their forerunners had a more ambitious programme of the cancellation of debts and the redistribution of land (*chreōn apokopē kai gēs anadasmos*), the Zealots at any rate went to the length of a partial disendowment of monasteries and some confiscation of the property of the rich, with the aim of relieving the poor and the general improvement of their city. A revolution at Adrianople, about the year 1340, gave the signal and served as an example. The nobles of Adrianople had been expelled, or imprisoned, and their property confiscated; and a similar policy began to be pursued at Thessalonica about the year 1342. Here, however, the revolution was carried to greater lengths, and ran a longer and more tumultuous course. The Zealots of Thessalonica were a definite party, with an organization and a programme; they had a party chief, who divided power with the local representative of the Byzantine government; they had the backing of the guild or corporation of sailors; and eventually, in 1345, their activity exploded in a massacre of a hundred or more of the members of the upper classes, who were hurled from the walls of the citadel, in which they had been imprisoned, and cut to pieces by an angry mob which stood in waiting below. Thessa-

[1] See O. Tafrali, op. cit., pp. 201–2. But Tafrali has a bias in favour of the Zealots, and he produces no *evidence* in favour of the conjecture.

lonica thus witnessed the same horrors which had been perpetrated at Corcyra, and described by Thucydides, nearly eighteen hundred years earlier; and the ancient Greek inheritance thus asserted its force, in the tragic form of *stasis* and massacre, at the same time that it was also renewing its strength in the nobler form of learning and philosophy. For some years after this explosion of fury there was a virtual republic in the city; but the régime of the Zealots was short lived. They were caught and overwhelmed in the surrounding movement of events; and they made the fatal mistake of appealing to the Serbs for help, which alienated sympathy from their cause. John Cantacuzene won the day and obtained possession of the city in 1350: the chiefs of the Zealots were arrested: Palamas, who had been appointed archbishop of Thessalonica but refused admission by the citizens, took possession of his see; and the cause of conservatism triumphed both in Church and State. The upper classes regained their power in the city of Thessalonica; and in all that was left of the Byzantine Empire Orthodoxy of the monastic type was henceforth the dominant factor and determined the pattern of thought.

The passages of translation which follow are with one exception taken from a speech of Nicolas Cabasilas 'concerning the assaults illegally delivered by the magistrates against things spiritual' (*ta hiera*). Nicolas Cabasilas was a nephew of Neilos Cabasilas, who had followed Palamas as archbishop of Thessalonica in 1360; and he in turn followed his uncle, as archbishop, until his death in 1371. He belonged to the monastic or Palamite school of thought, and he was naturally biased against the Zealots. But he had social sympathies, and he wrote a treatise 'against usurers'; he was a genuine and devout mystic, free from the excesses of some of his fellows; and though he was a Palamite, and a friend of John Cantacuzene, he had a generous outlook, which enabled him to do justice to causes and interests opposed to his own. He could speak of his city as the imitator of ancient Athens, and on an even wider scale he could think and write of 'this community of all Hellas', embracing all who spoke the Greek language. He was, too, a man of affairs, as well as a mystic and a scholar: he was more than once employed on missions and embassies; and he

corresponded with the dowager empress Anne. His testimony about the Zealots has thus some title to consideration, even if it has a natural bias, and even though it is directed against their policy. The speech in which it comes (a speech which seems to have been delivered in court, and which at any rate is couched in terms of an address to the judges of a court) is preserved in a manuscript of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris (MS. gr. No. 1213). Passages from the manuscript are quoted by O. Tafrali in the footnotes of his book *Thessalonique au quatorzième Siècle*; and several of the passages so quoted are here translated to illustrate the social and political ideas which were current in Thessalonica in the middle of the fifteenth century. Some passages are also added from the *Romaic History* of Nicephorus Gregoras (a pupil and friend of Theodore Metochites), in which the movement of the Zealots is described and criticized.

(*a*) *The Policy and Aims of the Zealots*

(As described by Nicolas Cabasilas)

1. 'The excuse made by these men [i.e. the Zealots] can be expressed under three headings. First they allege the prerogative belonging to those in charge of the government, which entitles them—so they say—to administer the affairs of the governed as they think fit. Next, they plead the right to use confiscated property for the need which it can serve, and they argue that there is no injustice even when confiscation is compulsorily enforced. Lastly, they urge the existence of custom, on which point—so they say—the laws themselves are in agreement with them, enjoining, as they do, that cities should follow custom instead and in lieu of law.' [From the speech of Nicolas Cabasilas, 'Concerning the assaults made by the magistrates on things spiritual', quoted by O. Tafrali, op. cit., p. 265, n. 2.]

2. 'The excuse they give [for their action] is that it is incumbent on those who are charged with the business of the community to conduct all such business with an eye to the common interest—just as we see a guardian administering the property of young minors not as it pleases them, but in the way that he knows will be to their advantage. And yet they [the Zealots]

think it right that the young should be the leaders of the community'[1] [ibid., p. 265, n. 3].

3. 'What is there wrong [the Zealots ask] if we take some of the great wealth that belongs to monasteries and use it to support the poor, help the clergy, and decorate the churches? This will do no harm to the monasteries: what is left to them is sufficient for their needs; and there is nothing in it that departs from the intention of those who originally gave the endowment, for they looked to no other end than the worship of God and the support of the poor [ibid., p. 266, n. 1].

4. 'If we arm soldiers from these funds, to fight and die in the cause of these holy things [i.e. the churches and the religious life of the city] and on behalf of our laws and fortifications, is it not better so than that they should be spent to no purpose by monks and priests who need only a little for the table and the other requirements of life—sitting as they do at home, living under their own roof, and having no danger to face? . . . What is necessary above everything else is the stability of our walls and the existence of law: and that—so far as men go, and if one looks to men [only]—is the business of soldiers. . . . What wrong are we doing if we ask that they [i.e. the monks] should do as much to support the soldiers who defend their liberty as they do in repairing roofs, putting tumble-down houses in order, and taking care of lands and estates? . . . If it is lawful for servants, farmers, builders and bakers to be supported from ecclesiastical funds, why should it not be still more lawful for soldiers to be supported by them?' [ibid., p. 267, nn. 1 to 4].

5. 'How can there be any justice in blaming men [i.e. the Zealots] who use all the resources they have in such ways; paying no attention to their own affairs, adding nothing to their own wealth, and never decorating their own houses, but always aiming, in all their expenditure, at what will be to the interest of the governed?' [ibid., p. 268, n. 1].

6. 'There is much wickedness everywhere, and but little good. . . . Epiphanius, we are told, and David before him, thought it

[1] This last sentence refers to the policy of the Zealots in removing the rule that seniority was a necessary qualification for office.

necessary at times to neglect strict justice and to relax the severity of the law. David, though it was not proper for him to do so, ate the shewbread, and Epiphanius took the wealth of John by stealth and flung it into the hands of the poor. What wrong, then, do we do, if, when the same causes and seasons are upon us, *we* do what was done by righteous and God-fearing men, who, it is reasonable to hold, were moved by God to do what they did?' [Tafrali, op. cit., p. 271, n. 1].

(*b*) *The Policy and Aims of the Zealots*

(As criticized by Nicolas Cabasilas in his speech and by Nicephorus Gregoras in his *Historia Romaica*)

1. 'The monasteries have fields and houses and villages, and also acres of land and other such forms of property, which ought to be left to the use and enjoyment of the monks to whom they were given by the original owners. They [i.e. the Zealots] deprive them of their property, and take it in part for their own use and in part for the use of others. What they take is generally money, wheat, barley, wine, and other forms of produce; but sometimes it includes tenant-farmers, villages, and the land itself. . . . Now the laws say clearly that he who acquires [any property] by a deed of conveyance should keep possession of what he acquires; and to make such a deed null and void is to go against the laws' [From Tafrali, op. cit., p. 263, n. 2].

2. 'You have offended against both laws—the [canon] law relating to ecclesiastical matters and the civil law; for when you divert monastic and other ecclesiastical property to the service of public purposes, you commit a double wrong, and your action is both sacrilege and injustice. . . . I admit that the management of the property of the governed should be a matter for the Government, but that is the case when the property is public, and not when it is private; for each man, I contend, can control his own house and use his own property as he thinks fit. . . . You claim to be a partner in men's property; why should you not then visit *all* men's houses, take *their* money, and impose new taxes on *them*?' [ibid., p. 269, n. 5].

3. 'If you deprive them [i.e. the monks] of their property when you have no ground of complaint against them, why do you punish robbers? . . . When you take what you are not entitled to take under the terms of the donation made by those who had authority to make it, and when you commit the same sort of injustice as they [i.e. robbers] commit, it seems to me that, in preventing them from their wrongdoing and condoning your own wrongdoing, you punish the hardy offender not from hatred of the wrong he does but because you are sadly annoyed by his action. . . . Look at all wrongdoers and criminals—burglars, violators of tombs, and robbers—who are visited by the law with innumerable penalties: there is no other complaint to be brought against them than that they take property from others illegally and unjustly' [ibid., p. 270, nn. 2 and 3].

4. 'The laws ordain that magistrates should be appointed without paying any consideration; but there is no magistrate of *their* making who has attained office without giving something for it. Many gifts are made before election; and many are made to them [i.e. the Zealots] by the magistrates after election' [ibid., p. 264, n. 1].

5. 'We should not choose a ruler from the fleet[1] or from sailors or soldiers, as if he were well and properly advised; [we should choose] one who secures the good will of the governed for himself and good government for the city, one who pays reverence to the laws and to all things spiritual—a man likely to show wisdom and prudence and expert in matters political. But a man who transgresses the laws, who disdains ranks and degrees, who betrays the cause of liberty; a man who disgraces the people he governs as well as himself, and who is hated by those who should love him; a man who has gathered together ships and arms and soldiers, but has abandoned and rejected the objects for which battles by land and sea should be fought and all other efforts should be made; a man who has this record, and counts this transaction as gain—surely such a man goes astray. He gives clear proof that he is not only utterly ignorant of what is owed to the community

[1] The revolutionaries found support among the sailors of the port, who were a sort of 'sailors soviet' acting as their bodyguard.

but also of what he owes to himself, and he shows that he does not know that the conduct of government was never meant for him. Such things as these—money and ships and armies—are not the things which ought to be regarded as the business of rulers, and as demanding their attention above all other things. If that were so, how would rulers differ from tyrants, who count nothing more important than armaments, and who will squander away law, justice, religion and everything else in order to be strong in arms?' [Tafrali, op. cit., p. 272, n. 1].

6. 'Sedition (*stasis*) had long had a hold on the city: a group of Zealots—for that was the name by which they went—dominated the rest of its citizens. The polity they sought to establish could not be regarded as an imitation of any other form. It was not aristocratic, after the manner of the constitution which Lycurgus induced the Spartans of old to establish; nor was it democratic, like the original constitution of Athens or the reformed constitution which Cleisthenes introduced when he increased the four tribes to ten. Neither was it a more modern and mixed type, composed of two or more constitutions, such as the island of Cyprus once followed, or such as the people of ancient Rome is said to have established when it rose in revolt against the patrician order. It was a system of mob-government (*ochlokratia*) of a strange character, buffeted and tossed by the movement of chance. The bolder spirits, combining in a self-elected group based on their own arbitrary discretion, trod men of all ages underfoot: they became the demagogues of the city-mob and swayed it at their will: they confiscated the property of the rich and lived in luxury themselves, laying it down as a rule that no obedience should be paid to any external authority, and that their own will and pleasure should be the law and standard to be followed by all others.'

(From Nicephorus Gregoras, *Historia Romaica*, book XVI, c. i, p. 2, printed in the *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae*, pars xix, vol. ii, pp. 795–6.)

In an earlier passage of his history, book XIII, c. x, §§ 4–6, Gregoras had described the beginning of civil war and massacres. 'When the city was thus divided between the rich and the poor,

a third faction, of a vulgar and promiscuous character, was added to these two parties—a faction which knew nothing of justice or injustice but was easily used as a tool, by those who so desired, for any purpose which the audacity of their views suggested, to the ruin of all whom they envied. This sort of people do not know how to serve the cause of self-government (*autonomia*), or how to obey the laws laid down by the men of old—men who spent their lives among books, and who drew from them the power of bringing harmony into political affairs and imposing laws on the movement of unruly wills and affections for the sake of the general welfare. . . . [On the contrary] they destroy the houses of the well-to-do, down to their very foundations; and they use the sword, in their uncontrollable passion, ruthlessly and with no reason in fighting their miserable victims. . . . They call themselves Zealots, veiling the aims of their malice under fine-sounding names; and, inciting men's appetites by the hopes of easy gains, they draw the people at large into alliance with themselves. . . . They behaved more harshly to the rich than they would to a foreign foe; they seized the wealth in their houses for themselves, as if they were so many brigands; they ruthlessly murdered any rich man whom they encountered, and they emptied the cup of civil bloodshed in the open street.'

Gregoras, it may be added, was a scholar of Constantinople. He had studied there with Theodore Metochites: he had crossed swords with Barlaam, the antagonist of the hesychasts; and he wrote voluminously on theology and philosophy as well as on history. He was the greatest scholar of his age (the first half of the fourteenth century), and his *Romaic History*, which covers the period from 1204 to 1359, is especially full and detailed on the events of his own lifetime. Belonging by sympathy to the monastic side, he was biased, as was Cabasilas, against the Zealots.

§ 6. A LETTER OF THE PATRIARCH ANTONIUS TO VASILI I, GRAND PRINCE OF RUSSIA, ON THE UNITY OF THE EMPIRE AND THE CHURCH AND THE UNIVERSALITY OF THE EMPIRE (*circa* A.D. 1395)

(From Miklosich and Müller, *Acta et Diplomata Graeca Medii Aevi*, ii. 190–2)

'The holy emperor has a great place in the Church: he is not as other rulers and the governors of other regions are; and this is because the emperors, from the beginning, established and confirmed true religion (*eusebeia*) in all the inhabited world (*oikoumenē*). They convoked the oecumenical councils; they confirmed, and ordered to be accepted, the pronouncements of the divine and holy canons concerning true doctrines and the government of Christian men; they struggled hard against heresies; and it was imperial decrees that, along with the Councils, fixed the metropolitanates of the arch-priests, the division of dioceses, and the lines of their boundaries. For all these reasons the emperors have a great place and honour in the Church. Yea even if, by the permission of God, the nations [i.e. the Turks] now encircle the government and the residence of the emperor, the emperor has still to this day the same appointment (*cheirotonia*) and support from the Church; he has the same position and prayers: he is anointed with the solemn myrrh, and appointed *basileus* and *autokratōr* of the Romans—to wit, of all Christians; the name of the emperor is recited in all places by all patriarchs, metropolitans, and bishops, wherever men have the name of Christians. No other rulers or governors of provinces have such a position; so great is the authority which all men allow him that even the Latins themselves, who have no communion with our Church, render him the same honour and the same loyalty as they did in the days of old when they were united with us; and much more do Orthodox Christians owe him this recognition. If the nations encircle the residence of the emperor, it does not follow that Christians should despise him: on the contrary they should take the lesson to heart (and be therefore the more considerate towards him) that

if the great king himself, the lord and governor of the Universe, who is invested with so great power, be reduced to such straits as these, a worse fate is likely to befall other rulers who have smaller realms and fewer subjects. Why, your Excellency, you yourself and your own dominions often suffer afflictions and sieges, and your subjects are often driven into captivity, but that does not justify us in despising you: on the contrary we, your humble servants, and our holy emperor himself, address you still in the traditional style, and we render you the same honours, in our letters and documents and communications, as were received by the great kings your predecessors.

'My son, you are wrong in saying, "We have a church, but not an emperor".[1] It is not possible for Christians to have a church (*ekklēsia*) and not to have an empire (*basileia*). Church and empire have a great unity (*henōsis*) and community; nor is it possible for them to be separated from one another. The only emperors that Christians refuse to acknowledge are heretics who have attacked the Church and introduced doctrines that are corrupt and alien from the teaching of the Apostles and the Fathers. Our great and holy sovereign (*autocratōr*), by the grace of God, is most orthodox and faithful: he is the champion, defender, and vindicator of the Church: and it is not possible that there should be a primate who does not make mention of his name. Hear what the prince of the Apostles, Peter, says, in the first of his general epistles, "Fear God, honour the King". He did not say "Kings", lest any man should think that he had in mind those who are called kings promiscuously among the nations: he said "the King", showing thereby that the catholic [i.e. universal] king is *one*. And who is the person that these words indicate? They indicated, *at the time*, a man who was irreligious and a persecutor of Christians; but he who spoke the words—foreseeing the future, because he was holy and an apostle, and knowing the Christians were to have but one king—instructed men to honour even an irreligious king, to the end that they might thereby learn to honour the religious and orthodox king [in the future]. For if there are also others in the world of Christian men

[1] That is to say, 'We acknowledge and we belong to the Byzantine patriarchate, but we do not acknowledge or belong to the Byzantine empire'.

who assume for themselves the name of emperor,[1] all such action is unnatural and illegal, the result rather of tyranny and force [than of nature]. What are the fathers, or the councils, or the canons, that speak of *them*? He of whom they speak—nay, cry aloud up and down—is the *natural* King: the king whose enactments and ordinances and commands are accepted in all the universe; the king of whom, and of whom alone, Christians everywhere make mention. And therefore, my son, I write to your Excellency, and I give you this counsel. . . .'

§ 7. GEMISTUS PLETHON

Introduction

Georgius Gemistus, who assumed the additional, or alternative, name of Plethon (which has something of the same sense in Greek as Gemistus, but had for him also the advantage of similarity to the name of his master Plato), was born in Constantinople in 1355, and lived to be nearly a centenarian. In his youth he spent some time at Adrianople, which was then the European capital of the Ottoman Turks:[2] there he was the guest, or disciple, of one Elisha, 'who appeared to be a Jew but was really a polytheist', and who is said to have made him acquainted with the (apocryphal) 'oracles' of Zoroaster. Be that as it may—and it is very possible that Plethon discovered these 'oracles' for himself in his study of the neo-Platonist writings in which they are quoted—he ultimately found his way to Mistra, in the Peloponnese, the residence of a Greek 'despot' who belonged to the family of the Palaeologi, and the centre of a lively cultural activity. Mistra lay on the slopes of Mount Taygetus, near ancient Sparta: it is still today a place of churches, with notable frescoes of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. In the days when Plethon lived there (*circa* 1380–1450) the court of the 'despot' attracted a number of scholars, in much the same way as did the courts of the contemporary Italian princes of the Renaissance; and here Plethon found a congenial home. He

[1] The reference is to the Western emperors.

[2] This depends on a conjecture. The patriarch Gennadius (the great adversary of Plethon), to one of whose letters we owe our knowledge of this episode in Plethon's life, speaks of him as having been domiciled 'at the court of the barbarians', a vague phrase which seems to suggest the Turkish court at Adrianople.

became a famous teacher, professing the doctrines of Plato, or rather of the neo-Platonists: and he counted among his pupils Bessarion, who was afterwards a cardinal of the Roman Church. He is reported also to have exercised some sort of judicial function, though this may only have been in his later years. For the greater part of his life he was engaged in teaching and writing; and about 1415 he wrote two addresses, one to the emperor at Constantinople and one to the 'despot' his son, 'on the state of the Peloponnese', which are notable for their political ideas and their practical suggestions.

At one period of his life he played something of a part on the European scene, and acquired some fame in Italy. The declining fortunes of the Eastern Empire raised the question of a possible union of the Eastern or Greek Church with the Western or Latin, as a way of inducing the West to come to the aid of the East against the peril of Turkish advance. The question came to a head at a conference or council held in Italy, first at Ferrara and then at Florence, in the years 1438 and 1439. Plethon was one of the representatives of the Greeks, but he took little part in the deliberations of the Council, and occupied himself mainly in discoursing on Plato and the neo-Platonists. Marsilio Ficino records that during the sessions of the Council at Florence Cosimo de Medici frequently attended his discourses, and was inspired by them with the idea of founding the Florentine Academy, which afterwards did so much to spread Platonic lore in the West. Returning to Mistra in his old age (he was already an octogenarian), Plethon devoted himself, as Plato had done in *his* old age, to the composition of a treatise *On Laws*. Law, however, was not its theme: it was rather a proclamation of his religious views, in which, like the emperor Julian more than a thousand years before, he sought to oppose a reformed paganism (a sort of Platonic-Pythagorean-Zoroastrian amalgam) to the faith and doctrine of Christianity. The treatise only survives in fragments: it was burned, after the death of Plethon, by the patriarch Gennadius; but when he consigned it to the flames the patriarch left some passages, at the beginning and the end, to show what had been its nature and to serve as a justification of his action. There are

other writings of Plethon's old age—one defending the cause of Plato against the Aristotelians of the Greek Church, and another raising again one of the vexed questions of doctrine (that of the procession of the Holy Ghost) supposed to have been settled by the Council of 1438–9—and these, like his treatise *On Laws*, involved him in controversy. But the last of his recorded deliverances—a brief address to one of the Palaeologi who was engaged in a quarrel with his brother—is a sober appeal for peace, in which he cites the example of the generous behaviour of the Athenian democrats to their adversaries in 404 B.C.—behaviour which had been praised by Aristotle as the finest and most statesmanlike on record.[1] (Plethon could thus use his learning to good purpose.) He died about 1450, and was buried in a church at Mistra (which suggests that he was not regarded at the time[2] as an utter heretic); but a quarter of a century afterwards, in 1475, his body was exhumed, transported to Italy, and reinterred in a church at Rimini by a Malatesta who was lord of that town. The tomb in which his ashes lie bears an inscription recording the name of *Gemistus Byzantinus philosophus suo tempore princeps.*

I. *To Manuel Palaeologus, on affairs in the Peloponnese*

(Printed in *Palaiologeia kai Peloponnesiaka*, edited by Lambros, iii. 247 ff.)

(*a*) *On the importance of the Peloponnese*

pp. 247–9. 'We, whose ruler you are, are Greeks by birth, as our language and national culture testify. Now no country can be found which is more intimately and closely connected with the Greeks than is the Peloponnese, with the part of Europe near it and the adjacent islands. It is a country which the same Greek stock has always inhabited, as far back as human memory goes: no other people had settled there before them, nor have immi-

[1] Aristotle on the Constitution of Athens (*Athēnaiōn Politeia*), c. xl, §. 3.

[2] It was only after Plethon's death that the treatise *On Laws*, with its new 'Hellenic theology', came into the hands of the patriarch Gennadius. It was a unique copy, sent to him by the 'despot' of the Peloponnese, into whose hands it had come. Gennadius read it, burned it, and ordered the destruction of all other copies if any should be found. This was about 1459, some ten years or so after Plethon's death.

grants occupied it subsequently.[1] . . . On the contrary, Greeks have always occupied this country as their own, and while they have emigrated from it, owing to the pressure of population, and have occupied other and not inconsiderable territories, they have never abandoned it. . . . It is from this basis that the Greeks have achieved their greatest and most famous exploits. Even this great city of ours on the Bosporus, which is now the seat of your empire, may be seen on reflection to be, as it were, a daughter and a derivative of this country; for, in the first place, the original settlers in Byzantium were Greeks and Dorians (and the Dorians were clearly inhabitants of the Peloponnese), and, secondly, those who afterwards came from the Italian city of Rome to found a famous colony[2] and made a great and noble addition to Byzantium, were no strangers to the people of the Peloponnese, if it be true (as indeed was the case) that the Sabines were joined as settlers, on terms of equality and parity, with the descendants of Aeneas when they originally founded Rome—that city blessed above all others—for these Sabines came from the Peloponnese, and were Lacedaemonians in origin.'[3]

Plethon proceeds to argue that the Peloponnese offers a particular security: it is both an island—in virtue of the wall recently erected by Manuel at the isthmus of Corinth—and also, in virtue of its dimensions, a mainland, and a mainland which is eminently defensible, with its hilly character and its many citadels. (It was in one of these citadels that Plethon himself lived, taught, and wrote.)

(*b*) *On the reform of the army in the Peloponnese*

pp. 251–4. 'The first thing to notice is that the bulk of the population in the Peloponnese are at present engaged partly in farming (or some in pasturing flocks), and in providing thereby

[1] The Slav immigration into the Peloponnese, which began in the seventh century A.D., would not appear, in the view of Plethon, to have altered its racial composition. But see Vasiliev, *History of the Byzantine Empire*, Eng. trans., pp. 176–9.

[2] The allusion is to Constantine's foundation of the city named after him, on the site of the ancient Byzantium.

[3] This is a tradition reported by Dionysius of Halicarnassus in his *Roman Antiquities*.

for the needs of their own livelihood and the payment of taxes to the public exchequer, and partly, at the same time, in doing military service. The taxes paid are indeed small; but they are numerous, they are collected by a number of agents, and the collection is mostly in money and not in kind. [The result of the system, Plethon argues, is military weakness: soldiers of this type pine to get back to work on the land, and they are also inadequately equipped with arms.] How can one and the same person at once do military service and at the same time maintain himself and others?'

Plethon rejects the idea, which apparently had been mooted, of a hearth-tax to maintain a force of foreign mercenaries to stand on guard at the isthmus; a tax sufficient for that purpose would be ruinous. He proposes his own scheme for a new type of army (pp. 253–4). The first reform to be attempted is to ensure that the same persons should not be both soldiers and tax-payers at the same time. All the people of the Peloponnese should, to begin with, be divided into two sections,[1] one of soldiers and one of tax-payers, according to the natural capacities of each person. Those who are soldiers, besides being exempt from the payment of taxes, should have provision made for their maintenance; those who are tax-payers should be exempt from military service, and should no longer pay their taxes in small, but numerous, duties, collected by a number of agents and paid in money (which is all a source of great difficulty both to the payer and collector); they should, instead, pay one single tax, pay it in kind, and pay it to a single collector, in such form and to such extent that it is at once just, sufficient for the charges to be met, and as little oppressive as possible to the tax-payers themselves.

(*c*) *On the economic basis of the army, and on the agricultural system*

pp. 254–7. 'The produce of the labour of all should in justice be assigned to three different recipients—first, to the labourer himself; secondly, to the person who provides the stock (*telē*) for the

[1] Plethon is here moving towards the Platonic system of classes suggested in the *Republic*. It will be seen that his argument, as it proceeds, is more and more reminiscent of the *Republic*, even to the use of Plato's language.

labour; and thirdly, to the person who ensures security for the whole community. The labourers are ploughmen, diggers, and shepherds: the stock for their labour is oxen, vines, flocks, and the like; those who ensure security for the whole community are the soldiers, who face danger on its behalf, and the officers and other persons who are in control of the several branches of common affairs and manage each branch whether great or small—with the king at their head, in control of all branches, guiding and managing them all. [All these are needed, and each of them is necessary to the other two.] . . . Accordingly I propose that the produce of the labour of all—corn, wine, olives, silk, lambs, milk, wool, and the like (the amount of the produce being reckoned for ploughmen after the deduction of seed for the next harvest, and for shepherds after provision for replacement of the old animals in their flock)—should be divided into three parts; one going to the labourer himself, one to [the upkeep of] the stock, and the third to the public exchequer . . . . Those who pay this tax [to the exchequer] may be called helots, in virtue of being exempt from military service and in the position of tax-payers; they should be regarded as the foster-fathers of the community, and should be subject to no further duty; nothing should be demanded from them other than this tax or in addition to this one thing; nobody should have authority to press them for forced labour, and they should be treated as well as possible without any shadow of injustice.

'The army being organized on this basis [i.e. as a regular permanent body] each infantry soldier should have one helot assigned to him, and each mounted man should have two; and thus each soldier—while enjoying his own produce so far as his military service permits him to labour on the land—will be able to count on the share of produce paid to him by his helot . . . and will be in a position to serve in the army with proper equipment and to remain permanently with the standards. Where it is possible to divide the whole population into permanent soldiers and permanent helots because all are not fit to be soldiers, this is the system that should be adopted; but where most of the population appear fit to be soldiers, a system of 'pairs' should be followed—all the fit men being arranged in couples, and each couple being

compelled to labour on the land (with a stock that will generally be common), but the two alternating with one another so that one of them labours on the land with the common stock and the other does military service.'

(d) A digression on 'philosophers' and whether they should be maintained from the public funds

pp. 257–8. Plethon proceeds to suggest the number of helots to be assigned to officers and serjeants, to the king himself, and to the higher clergy; and then he turns aside to 'philosophers'. 'As for those who profess to pursue philosophy and claim on this plea to receive a large portion of the public funds, I would lay it down as proper, and as befitting this class of persons, that no part of the common funds should be allocated to them, but they should be permitted to enjoy their private means free of taxes, without contributing to or receiving anything from the common funds.... The contributions of tax-payers are, even at the present time [i.e. apart from any consideration of future reform], intended as a remuneration to the guardians of the community for the work which they do in the cause of general security; but those who profess to pursue philosophy render no service for the common benefit. It is others who are consecrated to that cause; and these 'philosophers' (as indeed they say of themselves) stand aloof from all occupations to offer their private invocations to the gods and to cultivate their own souls. . . . No one, I take it, would support their claim to public support unless he had in his nature so large an element of superstition (that third form of irreligion)[1] as to think that any of these improper offerings [i.e. those made by the 'philosophers'] are acceptable to God. . . .'

By 'philosophers' it would seem that Plethon means monks (in the Greek language of the Middle Ages the word *philosophein* was used in the sense of following the monastic vocation). If this be the case, and if he is thus attacking monasticism in this passage, we may draw the conclusion that he was already feeling his way in 1415 towards the new 'Hellenic theology' which he set forth over

[1] See below, p. 210, note.

thirty years later in his treatise *On Laws* (see pp. 212 ff., below). We may also say that he anticipates, on this point, the Lutheran and Anglican attitude to monasticism in the sixteenth century. (It may be significant that this passage was omitted in a nineteenth-century edition of his oration published in Greece—perhaps as being likely to offend the Orthodox Church.)

(*e*) *On land-nationalization*

pp. 260–1. 'I would next suggest that all the land should be the common property of all its inhabitants, as perhaps it is by nature, and that no man should claim any part as his private property. Every man who wishes to do so should be allowed to plant a crop, wherever he will, to erect a house, and to plough as much land as he wishes and is able to plough, on the assumption that he will have that amount at his disposal in so far as, and on condition that, he does not neglect to till it while he is its occupant; meanwhile he should pay no rent to any person, and should not be let or hindered by any person, other than one who has anticipated him in cultivating it, and this according to the rule regulating all common property that does not belong to any one man more than it does to another. Then, and on that basis, the occupant of land will, if he ranks among the helots, pay to the public funds a third of the produce, as I have suggested; but he will have no further obligation whatsoever to any person, and he will be counted as having paid finally, and once for all, the whole of his dues. If, on the other hand, he ranks among the soldiers, or as a member of any other branch which is engaged in the service of public affairs, he will have no liability except that of discharging the service of the branch to which he belongs. . . . Some men may think that they will be deprived of some piece of property on this plan; but it is a sufficient consolation to them to reflect that if they might lose some piece of property, they would equally be acquiring the power of using *any* of the land in the common stock—unless they preferred to be idle. All the land would be under cultivation and crops, and no part would be idle or untended, if it were equally possible for all who wished to apply their labour wherever they desired to do so; and the scheme I suggest would

thus be to the greater advantage both of the community and of the individual.'

Plethon does not follow Plato in this scheme of land-nationalization. (Plato had left land as private property in the hands of members of the farming class, and had only sought to 'nationalize' a part of its produce for the maintenance of the class of guardians.) If there are any analogies to Plethon's scheme, they are to be found in the future—in Locke's theory of property in the *Second Treatise on Civil Government* (c. v), and in Rousseau's theory in the *Du Contrat Social* (Book I, c. ix).

(*f*) *On the penal law and punishment*

pp. 261–2. 'It may be well to add a further suggestion. With us, as elsewhere, Sire, there are men to be found, guilty of the gravest offences, who are, in most cases, under sentence of death according to the rules of law. Actually this penalty, as things now stand, has fallen into desuetude: the judges condemn some of the offenders to mutilation, and they dismiss a great number practically unpunished. Neither extreme seems to me to be right. Mutilation is barbarous; it is un-Greek, and contrary to the tradition of our people; indeed it is a disgrace to us that persons thus afflicted should be seen up and down the country. But it is also most injurious, and dangerous to law and order, that criminals should be left unpunished. A form of punishment which in my view is better—which promotes the cause of law and order and is more to the advantage of the community—is that criminals should be set to work in chains, and should do such building as is needed (repairing, for instance, any damage to the walls on the Isthmus, or doing other like jobs wherever they are required); for then soldiers need not be forced to do this additional drudgery, except in case of absolute necessity, nor would tax-payers be compelled to do it in addition to paying their quota (which is the whole of the duty that they owe to the community) or to incur any further burden whatever beyond that payment.'

(*g*) *On the defects of the system of coinage*

pp. 262–3. 'Another thing which must not be omitted is a

reform of the absurdity of our system of coinage. It is the height of folly to use these foreign—and bad—bronze coins which we now use: it only brings profit to others, and much ridicule on ourselves. No little contribution to the reform of this abuse might be gained from a policy which I have already suggested. If taxpayers paid not in money but in kind, and if those who draw their income from the public funds drew it in kind, this would go a long way to ensure reform. There would be less need of money; and for the purposes of ordinary daily exchange any sort of ordinary currency would be adequate—especially as the Peloponnese would appear not to need at all any currency such as other countries value. It is a country which hardly seems to require—except for iron and arms—any foreign imports whatever such as need a currency for their payment. The iron and the arms which it needs could easily be got in return for our silks; and there would thus be no harm in putting out of circulation this bad foreign currency now in use.' We can make clothing for ourselves, Plethon goes on to argue, from our own wool and flax and cotton and silk: we need not import foreign wool brought to us from the Atlantic Ocean, or dress-materials from countries beyond the Ionian Sea. We should look far better if we dressed in native materials, and pursued a policy of self-sufficiency, than if we dress ourselves in foreign stuffs. . . . This leads him to suggest, in conclusion, a general policy of protection and a closed economy.

(*h*) *On the regulation of trade*

pp. 263–4. 'As I have mentioned imports, it may perhaps be well to add a few general words on the importation and exportation of goods. There are some commodities which we should do well to continue to import and some which we had better not import, and the same may also be said of exports: there are also some commodities, both imported and exported, where it makes little difference which course is adopted. But even these last commodities ought not be handled casually and left to chance; for they too have no little effect on policy, according as they are well or ill managed. As for the goods which had better be imported, we may lay it down, in order to ease their acquisition, that no man,

whether citizen or alien, should pay any dues at all on their importation; and as for goods which had better stay in the country, those who export such goods should pay heavy duties upon them, so that they may either stay in the country (if it does not pay to export them) and thus furnish a larger supply for the use of our citizens, or, if they are exported, be of some benefit to the community by the addition to the public funds of the duty paid upon them, which may then be used to defray the cost of embassies, or to meet any other item of extraordinary expenditure.

'This reform may perhaps be deferred to a later date. But what is most needed, and needed first, in the interest of immediate security, are the measures which I have already suggested for a regular army and for the provision of a revenue, paid severally by each tax-payer, which will be at once just, convenient to pay, and considerable in amount.' Plethon concludes his argument by urging that Manuel should decide to give effect to these measures, and by offering his own services to carry them into effect.

II. *To Theodore ('despot' of the Peloponnese and son of Manuel II Palaeologus)*

On the Peloponnese

(Printed in *Palaiologeia kai Peloponnesiaka*, edited by Lambros, iv. 113 ff.)

Plethon begins by laying it down that for the navigation of a ship, or the conduct of a battle, the directing genius of a single authority is always needed. But, he adds, advice may well be tendered to that authority by any man who has anything to contribute to the cause of general security; and in the face of dangers which threaten the Peloponnese from the Parapamisadae[1] (once, he remarks, conquered by Alexander and now seeking to revenge themselves on the Greeks) he ventures to offer some suggestions which may lead to reform and recovery. History, he argues, testifies that recovery is always possible: if Troy was captured by the Greeks,

[1] The Parapamisadae (more properly Parapanisadae) were a people living in antiquity on the North-West frontier of India. Plethon indicates by this name the Ottoman Turks who came originally from that region.

Aeneas and his comrades afterwards founded Rome, 'along with the Sabines who were Lacedaemonians' (see above, p. 199), and from that basis they acquired the greatest and finest empire recorded in the memory of man.

(*a*) *The reform of the constitutions the one way of recovery*

pp. 116–18. 'In the realm of human affairs the only way of ensuring a sure and safe recovery for any city or people is constitutional reform. The one and only reason why states succeed or fail is the merits or defects of their constitution. . . . The Spartans did not acquire a hegemony in Greece until the legislation of Lycurgus had established their renowned constitution; nor were they defeated and deprived of their hegemony until they allowed the constitution which he established to fall into decay.' They were succeeded by the Thebans, under the leadership of Epaminondas, who had thoroughly imbibed the teaching of the Pythagoreans, with its theory of the true type of constitution: the Thebans, again, were succeeded by Philip, who had been trained and educated under Epaminondas; and he was succeeded in turn by his son Alexander, who had been educated under his father—and also under Aristotle. Rome too throve by the merit of her constitution; and the history of the Saracens teaches the same lesson. It was when they enacted laws for themselves and established a new constitution[1]—which, if it had defects in other respects, may be held to have favoured expansion of territory and success in war—that they acquired a hegemony among their Arab kinsfolk and then proceeded to conquer the greater and better part of the Byzantine Empire.

(*b*) *General suggestions for constitutional reform*

pp. 118–21. 'Political recovery, then, depends on constitutional reform. . . . Now there are three original forms of constitution—monarchy, oligarchy, and democracy—and each of these has several species, which affect political life for better or for worse. Men of good judgement rank monarchy the best of all constitu-

1 Plethon would seem to be referring to the work of Mahomet and his successors.

tions, as being the one that is equipped with the best of advisers and also enjoys the benefit of good laws which are actually enforced.

'The best advisory body is a moderate number of trained and educated men. The mass of the people, who do not pay heed to one another or understand issues easily—partly because of their numbers, and partly because the greater part of them are uneducated—generally give their votes without any rational reflection. On the other hand a body which is reduced to very small numbers tends to consider the private interests of its members, and generally gives bad advice. It is a body composed of moderate numbers, and of men possessing some education, which will provide the best and safest advisers for the whole community: one man sees one side of the matter, another sees another; together they see all points of view and bring them all together;[1] they are moved by the common good, and they are moved by it in common. In addition to this, there is a presumption in favour of men of moderate fortune, rather than the very rich or the very poor. The rich, in their love of riches, are prone as a rule to give no advice which will not be of advantage to their own pockets; the poor, in their poverty, are apt to think of nothing but what will relieve their needs. It is men of moderate means who are ready on all occasions to take some thought for the common good.

'Good laws, as a general rule, are laws which lay it down that each of the parts and classes of a state should discharge its own proper function; which forbid the men of each class to interfere with what is not properly theirs, whether in their actions or in the habits of their lives.[2] There are three such parts or classes of a state. The first, the most necessary, and the largest, in almost every state, is that of the husbandmen—farmers, shepherds, and all others who procure any produce from the land by the labours of their own hands. A second part or class is that which ministers to the needs of the husbandmen and of the rest of the population of the state—artisans, merchants, traders, and the like; . . . and

[1] The argument is very like an argument advanced by Aristotle in the *Politics*, book III, c. xi. But Aristotle advanced it in favour of the masses (*to plēthos*): Plethon uses it in favour of a limited body.

[2] The idea and even the formula are drawn from Plato's *Republic*.

there are also in this class some who live by hiring out the strength of their bodies in the service of others as occasional labourers. Finally, there is the ruling class—saviours and guardians of the whole state . . . with the king or some leader at their head and under him others who charge themselves with the different departments of the state and make provision for their security if anything untoward happens. Not all men can be persuaded that equality should be preserved, and nobody should seek to get more than his due or cherish designs against others; there are always some who, neglecting husbandry and refusing to contribute any other service to the general life, are parasites on the labours of others. It is to keep such men in order that the ruling class is required—judges and other officials to deal with them if they are fellow citizens; soldiers and their officers to deal with them if they are enemies. The members of this ruling class, occupied as they are with their guardianship of the community, and needing the aid of others for their support, must have contributions assigned to them, drawn in the main from the several members of the husbandman class, and serving to defray the cost of maintaining the body of guardians and to pay and reward that body for its work of guardianship. This is the origin of taxes.

'There being naturally these three original parts or classes in the state, each of them has its own specific way of life and mode of action; and a good system of law will lay it down that each of them should perform its own specific function. No class should exchange its way of life or mode of action for that of another; more especially, the ruling class should not engage in any of the pursuits of the ministerial class . . . such as merchandise, trading, and the like. A good system of law will lay it down that no man who holds office shall be allowed to engage in commerce or trade or any illiberal pursuit: it will also prescribe that soldiers should be distinguished from the masses, and generally that the protectors should be distinct from the protected. The protectors, exempt from all kinds of taxes, should do military service and face danger on behalf of the masses; the protected class, attending to its own proper business, should pay its contributions, which must be adequate but not burdensome, for the maintenance of the officers

and picked soldiers of the army. The bulk and the most essential part of the army should be composed of natives, but should not include foreigners.'

Going into details, after he has made these general suggestions, Plethon repeats the proposals he had made in his former oration addressed to Manuel: proposals in regard to the proper organization of the army, the management of agriculture, the system of taxation, penal law and punishments, coinage, and the regulation of trade (see above, pp. 199–206). He then turns to discuss the general theme of religion and its relation to the State.

(*c*) *Religion and the State*

pp. 125–6. 'These, then, and others like them, whether of greater or less importance, are the rules of a good constitution. But the main thing to be regarded is that the principles of religious belief, both public and private, should be definitely enunciated, and especially the following three sovereign principles; first, that there is some divinity in things, some Being supreme over all the universe; secondly, that this divinity has regard to men, and orders all their fortunes great and small; and thirdly that it orders all things according to its own judgement rightly and justly at all times, never deviating in any way from what is proper for each, and never heeding flattery or being turned from its purpose by men's offerings or by any other means. This divinity has no need of man; and that being so, it follows that we should pay our worship to it, and make our sacrifices and offerings to it, with moderation and in purity of heart, as the signs of our confession that all good things come to us from it. We must neither fall short in our worship (otherwise we give ground for the judgement that we are guilty of both—or at any rate one—of the two first kinds of irreligion[1]), nor must we carry our worship to an excess of expense and the ruin both of our own estates and of the public funds, as though we were likely to profit by the costliness of our gifts and offerings—conduct which gives ground for the judgement that we are not really making gifts to the godhead, but are

[1] There are three kinds of irreligion, corresponding to the three sovereign principles of religious belief just enunciated.

seeking to buy from it, and thus making ourselves guilty of the third form of irreligion.'

In this passage Plethon again seems to suggest (see above, p. 202), already in 1415, the religious views which he afterwards expounded at the end of his life (*circa* 1450) in his treatise *On Laws*. In book II, c. vi of that treatise (a chapter which seems to have had particular vogue, and which exists, unlike the rest of the work, in a number of manuscripts), he writes, with a stern predestinarianism: 'It is impossible to hold that the gods admit of change in respect of what is known to them about the future, or that they act at all otherwise than as they have ordained, either in consequence of human persuasion addressed to them in prayers and offerings or as the result of any other means intended to induce them to change. . . . Zeus the king . . . abides for ever identically the same: he has in himself the greatest and sternest of all necessities—a necessity that exists in virtue of its own inherent nature, and not by reason of anything other than itself; for necessity is a finer thing than non-necessity, and the greatest of all necessities is surely what is more fitting for Him who is utterly and absolutely good' (pp. 64 and 66 in C. Alexandre's edition of the treatise *On Laws*).

Plethon now proceeds to argue (in the further course of his address to Theodore) that true or false views of religion are the causes of virtue or vice; and here, following an old Greek tradition, he distinguishes between the 'Two Ways'—the way of good followed by Hercules, Lycurgus, Alexander, and Cyrus of Persia, and the way of evil followed by Paris of Troy, Sardanapalus, and Nero (pp. 127–8).

(*d*) *Recapitulation and Exhortation*

pp. 131 ff. 'First among these measures, I would have you, for a beginning, address yourself to establishing a body of advisers, and I would bid you choose men who will be as serviceable as possible to yourself, to others, and to the masses. . . . Next I would have you reform the main part of your army, dividing the people of the Peloponnese into two parts—one of those who do military service, and the other of those who pay their taxes in the

ways that seem most convenient for every payer: the same persons should no longer be required both to do service and pay taxes. . . . In addition you should also purge the ruling classes of persons engaged in trade: you should tell all their members not to engage in trade or merchandise for the future, but to concentrate on the one object of being really and truly rulers, concerned with the guardianship and security of the masses, and not pursuing "ministerial" occupations or depressing the condition of suffering husbandmen by the use of wrong weights, so common among tradesmen of the worse sort, or by any other tricks they can invent. If there be any who have pushed their way from being traders into the ruling class, they should either stop trading, if they seem to be of any merit, and confine themselves to the business of ruling, or else be dismissed from office. It is a mark of a poor constitution, which never produces any great or good results, when these distinctions are not observed; when traders are mixed with rulers; when soldiers serve as helots on the land and the security of the state thus depends on helots.' . . .

Plethon then recurs to the reform of taxation which he has suggested, and proceeds to urge the cause of economy at the Court and in the State generally. He cites to Theodore a parable from nature: 'the eagle is counted a sort of king and leader among all birds, and it has long been regarded as sacred to Zeus; but it is the least ornate of all birds, and its wings do not glitter with gold: the peacock is ornate and glitters with gold, but it is the farthest of all from being a leader by nature'. He ends his speech by begging Theodore not to delay, and his last words are a quotation from Hesiod:

> Procrastinators ever wrestle with calamity.

III. *The Treatise* On Laws (*nomōn syngraphē*)

The treatise begins with a brief statement of its main themes (which most probably comes from Plethon's own hand), followed by a table of contents which gives the headings of each of its hundred chapters.

The statement of the main themes runs as follows:

'This book contains:—

(1) A theology according to Zoroaster and Plato, with the gods who are recognized by philosophy named therein by the divine names traditional among the Greeks; . . .

(2) Ethics according to the same philosophers, and also, in addition, according to the Stoics;[1]

(3) Politics (literally "polity") according to the Spartan type; but with the omission of its excessive severity, which is repugnant to most men, and with the addition of philosophy, especially among the ruling class, which is the best element of the political institutions proposed by Plato.'

In addition to these three main themes there are also mentioned:

(4) a liturgy; (5) physics, 'in the main according to Aristotle'; and (6) some treatment of logical principles, Greek antiquities, and [the rules of] a healthy diet.

This statement of themes is curiously catholic; and the order of chapters stated in the table of contents which follows is confused and even chaotic. Of the chapters on the theory of politics hardly anything survives: there is at most only a fragment of a chapter concerned with penal law and punishments. Even if we had the whole work, we should probably have but little that dealt with matters political: the table of contents mentions only the headings of a few chapters (scattered promiscuously about the treatise) on the form of government, on education, on marriage, on family property and the rules of inheritance, on contributions to the public treasury, and on one or two other similar topics. Nearly the whole of the treatise is concerned with theology and cosmology, and with the construction of a liturgy for a new 'Hellenic' religion: politics goes into the background. The two addresses of 1415 furnish much more matter on politics than the surviving fragments of the treatise; indeed they perhaps contain more than the treatise ever did, even in its complete form.

[1] The only part of the surviving text of the treatise which shows any traces of Stoicism is a passage on suicide (conceived as a victory of the immortal part of man over the mortal, when the mortal part has become 'an evil and inconvenient companion'), which comes in the final chapter called the *Epinomis* (p. 248 in C. Alexandre's edition).

On Laws

(From the edition of C. Alexandre, Paris, 1858)

(*a*) *On Punishments*

Book III, c. 31, pp. 121–30. In this passage Plethon is concerned only with sexual misconduct and with the penalties with which it should be visited. He starts from the theological premiss that there is a chain of life, reaching from God through intermediate beings, which must at all costs be maintained, and maintained in its purity. 'It is our duty, in the matter of having children, to leave the issue to the gods themselves, and as far as we are ourselves concerned to shoulder the duty incumbent upon us and render the service we owe to our common humanity and the whole universe; . . . the provident design of Zeus for the continuance of the community between mortal and immortal beings, as that community appears in the shape of our human kind, must not be impeded by the abstinence of many from the pleasures of the senses' (p. 122); '. . . man, in addition to his other duties, ought to be a citizen, and not a solitary' (p. 124).[1] Convinced that the reproduction of the species is a duty we owe to God, Plethon would visit with capital punishment, and condemn to death by fire, all who are guilty of sexual aberration and misconduct. Those who are guilty of unnatural offences 'must be purified by fire: the offender and his accomplice must both be burned alive' (ibid., p. 124). So, too, men who are guilty of adultery must be burned alive, and panders and pimps along with them (ibid.); and the same punishment is denounced against the rape of any woman (p. 126). Incidentally Plethon suggests that any 'sophist' who is detected in advocating views contrary to these principles should also be burned alive (ibid.).

These drastic penalties are to be inflicted by a Sanhedrim or Court (*synedrion* in the Greek); if the votes cast are equal, the person accused is acquitted; but even should he be condemned by a majority of votes, and sentenced to death, the sentence may be commuted to imprisonment for a term of years if he can produce

[1] This general view of the chain of life and the duty of its maintenance is a basis of Plethon's attitude to monasticism.

evidence of good acts done in the past which in quality and in quantity more than counterbalance the offence which he has committed (p. 128). Thus Plethon modifies, at the end of his chapter on punishments, the Draconian severity of its general tone.

(*b*) *An evening prayer to the Gods*

Book III, c. 34, p. 186. In the course of his treatise, which is really an exposition of the new religion that he wished to found on the basis of neo-Platonism, Plethon includes a liturgy of prayers and hymns. The following passage comes from a long final prayer, addressed to Zeus, Poseidon, and the other Gods of his pantheon.

'You have granted to us that in goodness to our kinsfolk and to all mankind we may imitate you, who are always the source of good things but never of anything evil. You have granted that by civil association with one another we should share with you also in another gift—the gift of being, as far as it is possible for us, like yourselves, who are all born of the same father, Zeus the king, and begotten only of him, and who yourselves have unity (*henōsis*) and community with one another in the highest.'

Here, as Alexandre notes (on p. lxix of his preface), Plethon seeks to base moral duty on the one foundation of the principle that men ought to resemble the Deity as far as they possibly can, in order that they may maintain themselves in the station assigned to them in the *scala naturae*, intermediate between the gods and irrational creatures. In a word, they must preserve the chain of life, according to their station as one of its links; and just as, for that purpose, they must reproduce their species, so they must also maintain the superiority of the rational part of their nature over the irrational, not confounding themselves with the animals by following wholly the irrational part of their nature, but linking themselves to the Gods above (even if they are also linked with the animals below) by cultivating their rational part and assimilating themselves to the pure reason of the gods.

(*c*) *The* Epinomis, *or epilogue to the treatise* On Laws

Book III, c. 43, p. 256. 'Cycles of time produce, and will always produce, similar ways of life and similar activities from age to age.

Nothing new has ever yet come into existence: nothing comes into existence which has not existed as the same in idea at some time in the past, and which will not also exist again at some time in the future. No nation is a disbeliever in the existence of God; but different men have different and discrepant opinions of the nature of Deity. Now it needs must be that one single opinion [among all these different opinions] should always be the best, and that the rest should be inferior to it. . . . We follow the opinion of the school of Zoroaster, as being the best of all: it agrees with the philosophy of the school of Pythagoras and Plato: it is superior to all other opinions in authenticity, and at the same time it is the traditional religion of us Greeks.'

Plethon speaks of the theology which he professes as 'the Hellenic theology', in contrast with 'the Christian theology'. Hellenic nationalism, and the cult of *Hellenismos*, is at the centre of his belief. It is all the more curious that he should profess to be a follower of the school of Zoroaster. Perhaps 'Zoroaster' was no more than a blessed word: Plethon can hardly have regarded him as a Greek. But it was on Greek sources that he drew for his knowledge (if it can be called by that name) of the 'doctrines' of Zoroaster; and a brief account of these sources may not be irrelevant, as it is certainly curious.

In his reading of the neo-Platonist writers, and especially Proclus, Plethon had come across mention of the *Logia* of Zoroaster. These were apocryphal 'oracles' written in hexameter verses. The beginning of their composition may go back beyond the age of the neo-Platonists (*circa* A.D. 250–350) to that of the neo-Pythagoreans, who had begun to spread their doctrine in the days of Cicero. There were many of these fabrications; and they were all inspired by a sort of philosophical antiquarianism, which sought to find a justification for theories not by a proof of their truth but by a pretence of their antiquity. Many names were invoked—Pythagoras in Greece, Zoroaster in Persia, and a variety of legendary sages (or even divinities) in various regions of the East. Plethon was a ready victim of these fabrications. In the second chapter of the first book of his treatise he places first among his authorities (followed by a curious and composite list which includes not

only Minos of Crete and Numa of Rome, but also the Brahmans of India) 'Zoroaster, the oldest of legislators and sages known to us by report.'[1] At the end of the treatise, in the final chapter termed the *Epinomis*, he reiterates his debt. 'These doctrines have been particularly professed by the followers of Pythagoras and Plato.... They were also professed by Zoroaster and his followers. To him, the most ancient of all the sages in the memory of men, we ascribe such elements [as are oldest and best?] in our doctrines. Not that we believe them to have begun with him; for we hold that these true doctrines are coeval with the whole universe and [diffused] among all mankind; and if they have varied in vogue—having sometimes commanded a greater and sometimes a less allegiance—they have at any rate been always professed by those who, rightly and properly, find their basis in the common notions planted in our souls by the Gods. [Plethon thus suggests that, apart from its antiquity, his religion has the sanction of being a natural religion.] Yet the fact remains that of all whose names have survived to our times he [i.e. Zoroaster] is the most ancient exponent of the true doctrine; for he is recorded to have lived more than 5,000 years before the return of the Heraclidae [i.e. the Dorian conquest of the Peloponnese].'[2]

(*d*) *On 'Sophists', their false views, and the true doctrine*

The treatise *On Laws* ends with an attack on the 'Sophists', who may perhaps be identified with the monks of the Orthodox Church.[3] Already, in the first chapter of the first book, Plethon had deprecated the cult of 'solitude and celibacy', which runs contrary to the principle of the maintenance of the chain of life; and again in the second chapter of that book he had attacked the 'sophists' as seekers for reputation ('some of them, indeed, seekers for a reputation beyond the reach of man'), and he had denounced their false reasoning and the impostures of their pretended miracles. In the final chapter of his treatise he rises to a higher note.

'It may be said that there are some of the sophists, with a large body of their followers, who promise greater blessings to their

[1] p. 30 of Alexandre's edition.
[2] Ibid., p. 252.
[3] See above, p. 202.

adherents than those which we announce for mankind. They assure them that they will attain something in the nature of genuine immortality, unmixed with any mortal element; while our doctrine demands the view that our souls will never cease from participating in mortal nature during all the successive stages in which the cycle recurs [and during which they transmigrate to new bodies]. . . . But it is no cause for astonishment that our doctrine about the destinies of mankind should be held in the opinion of good judges [not only to be more true, but] also to offer greater blessings than those promised by the sophists. In the first place *they* do not postulate an eternity which is whole and complete, either for the whole of the Universe or for the soul of man. In a word, they do not admit eternity in both directions [i.e. in the past as well as in the future], but only in the one direction of the future, where alone they make it a principle of the development of being. They hold that the Universe has had a beginning in time, and they take the view that it will undergo change, like, and along with, our human fortunes. This they do in order that they may appear more convincing to those who listen to their preaching; and to this end they press a double argument—on the one hand that human fortunes do not change in and by themselves alone, but along with the whole of the Universe, and on the other hand that God sends men misfortunes for a brief time only, but will send them blessings during the infinity of time that follows. . . . We proclaim an eternity for the soul of man which is not a half-measure or lame, but whole and complete [i.e. *from everlasting* to everlasting], and we thus proclaim a greater blessing for man than that which he enjoys in their view; for it is plain that the eternity in both directions of which we speak is a far greater and finer thing than their half-eternity, and that a being eternal in our sense is much more complete and far nobler than a being eternal in their sense. . . .'

With this the story of Plethon may end. He was, in a sense, the last Greek voice. He was a Platonist (if also a 'Zoroastrian') some eighteen hundred years after the death of Plato: a Platonist in the double sense, first that he sought in his two orations *On the Peloponnese* to resuscitate the social and political ideas of the

Republic of Plato, and secondly that he also sought in his treatise *On Laws* to awaken the changed and shadowy ghost of Plato as he had appeared at the end of antiquity to Plotinus and Porphyry and Proclus. In his orations Plethon followed the Plato of Plato's middle life (about the year 387 B.C.) when the *Republic* was given to the world: in his treatise he followed—but he also travestied—Plato's *Laws* (*Nomoi*) and *Epinomis*,[1] using Platonic titles, but conveying under them a lore which was certainly post-Platonic. In seeking to revise the doctrines of the *Republic* of Plato he laboured utterly in vain: the Peloponnese was not reformed (the times were too much out of joint), and by the year 1460, within a decade of his death, it had been over-run by Mahomet II, devastated, and reduced to slavery. In his attempt to resuscitate neo-Platonism he was in tune with what may be called the 'antiquarian idealism' of the Renaissance, and he left some traces of his influence in the Italy of the later half of the fifteenth century. In Florence, according to the testimony of Marsilio Ficino, he inspired Cosimo de Medici with the idea of the Platonic Academy which he afterwards founded; and Ficino's own Latin translation of the works of Plato (printed in 1482) may have sprung from his inspiration. In Rome, too, the neo-paganism of Pomponius Laetus (a Calabrian whose house was the centre of the Roman Academy) may perhaps have owed something to the influence of Plethon; but the inspiration of Pomponius was Latin rather than Greek, and while the Platonic Academy of Florence burned a lamp before the bust of Plato, the Roman Academy worshipped the genius of the city of Rome.

[1] It is not certain that the *Epinomis* was a work of Plato. But Plethon followed what he thought to be the leading of Plato when he added a final section called the *Epinomis* to his own treatise *On Laws*.

APPENDIX

AN ANONYMOUS ADDRESS TO AN UNKNOWN KING

(*possibly a rhetorical exercise by a Byzantine scholar*)

Among the orations of Aelius Aristides (one of the lights of the 'second sophistic' in the second century A.D.) there is an oration (xxxv) addressed 'to a king' (*eis basilea*) which appears to be an imitation of the style and manner of Aristides by a later writer. It has been ascribed by scholars to the third century A.D. and dated either in the reign of Macrinus (217–18), or in that of Gallienus (253–68), or in that of Philip the Arabian (244–9).[1] An analysis of the content and argument may throw some light on its date, and would appear to suggest that it may be an exercise by a Byzantine scholar, possibly composed in the ninth century and the age of Photius, or, it may be, at an even later date.

In the beginning of the oration (§ 8) the unknown king is described as having addressed himself to affairs in holiness and in piety: 'it was the care of the gods that he should address himself to affairs in holiness and piety, so much so that they assigned to others the doing of mad and foolish deeds, and kept for him the works of justice, of humanity (*philanthrōpia*), and of piety in general'. (The writer, it will be noticed, speaks of 'the gods' and not of God; but the terms 'humanity' and 'piety' (*eusebeia*) are common terms of art with Byzantine writers, and are often used by them to denote the qualities proper to an emperor.) The argument then proceeds to the celebration of the three virtues shown by the *basileus*—first the virtue of justice; then the virtue of humanity; and finally that of wisdom (*phronēsis*).

Under the head of justice the writer of the oration deals first with matters of taxation. The unknown king had found the treasury empty; but instead of increasing the burden of taxation, which was already intolerable, he had begun by remitting taxes (§ 16). Next, the writer turns to matters of jurisdiction; and here he praises the 'humanity' of the king's administration of justice: 'he has an exact knowledge of what

[1] The editor of the orations of Aristides, B. Keil, suggests the first of these dates. A. von Domaszewski, in an article in *Philologus* (vol. lxv, for the year 1906, pp. 344–56), would date the speech in the reign of Gallienus and assign it to the year A.D. 260. E. Groag, in an article in *Wiener Studien* for the year 1918 (pp. 20–45), prefers to date it in the reign of Philip the Arabian.

is just, as being one who is himself a law-giver and a discoverer of law; . . . but even here he confirms and establishes his humanity, so that justice in its most exact form becomes one with humanity at its purest' (§ 17). (It is perhaps worth noting in this connexion that the *Ecloga* of Leo the Isaurian was promulgated as a reform of the laws 'with a view to greater *humanity*'.)[1] Finally—and still under the head of justice—the writer of the oration commemorates the services rendered by the king to the cause of Greek culture. 'If to be a phil-Hellene is a fine and proper quality in a king, *he* deserves praise on this ground: he is so much of a phil-Hellene, and he has such an abundance of this quality, that at a time when Greek culture (*paideia*) was neglected and despised, . . . and the whole of Hellenism was rejected and counted for nothing, he never neglected it, but added other and new honours to such as it already had' (§ 20). (This passage suggests a Byzantine writer, at a time of revival of Greek letters—a revival such as came in the ninth century, in the days of the foundation of a State university by Caesar Bardas.)[2]

From the quality of justice the argument of the oration proceeds to the cognate quality of humanity, which has already been noted in connexion with justice but now becomes a separate theme in its own right. What could be greater, the writer asks rhetorically, and what could be more illustrious, than the king's humanity? When all the people of the Empire were crouching in fear, when spies and eavesdroppers abounded everywhere, when a just and modest freedom of thought and speech was denied to men, he freed the minds of all men from fear, and gave them a full and perfect liberty: he was a father and a shepherd of his people, and he thought it the duty of a true king to be like the

[1] One passage on the king's administration of justice is worth quoting (§ 19). It bears on the theory of punishment. 'Punishment does not mean for him hatred of the wrongdoer [i.e. it does not mean *retribution* or vengeance]; it means education [i.e. *reformation*]—particularly, and if possible, of the wrongdoer himself, but if not of him, at any rate of those who hear of the punishment [and are thereby *deterred* from wrongdoing].'

[2] One reason against dating the oration in the third century A.D., and especially in the troubled half-century between the death of Alexander Severus and the accession of Diocletian (235–285), is that there had been no decay of Greek letters (which had been vigorous from the reign of Hadrian onwards) during that period. It is indeed true that the emperor Gallienus was during his reign a patron of Plotinus and Greek philosophy. But that patronage can hardly explain the language of the oration.

On the other hand, and in support of the view that the oration may be Byzantine in origin, it may be noted that the revival of *Hellēnikē paideia* was a constant theme of Byzantine writers. It was urged, for example, by Theophylact the Archbishop of Bulgaria about the year 1100; see above, p. 149.

King of the Universe in loving-kindness to his subjects and forethought on their behalf (§§ 21–24). Here the writer has recourse to ancient Greek history (as Byzantine writers often did) and to the poetry of Homer (another Byzantine staple): he compares the humanity of the king whom he is celebrating with the brutal conduct of the Spartan king Pausanias after the end of the Persian wars in 480 B.C., and he contrasts his courtesy and temperance with the self-indulgence and passion of Agamemnon and Achilles as they are described in the *Iliad* (§§ 25–30).

Finally the writer turns to the quality of wisdom—which he also calls by the name of cleverness (*deinotēs*)—as shown by the king in his conduct of policy (§§ 32–37). Here we almost seem to catch echoes of the military ruses and the wary diplomacy recommended in Leo's *Tactica* (*circa* A.D. 900) and the *De Administrando Imperio* of Constantine Porphyrogenitus (see above, p. 103). The king celebrated in the oration showed, we are told, good counsel and understanding in the conduct of war; he did not follow the military men whose aim is victory in battle rather than the triumph of policy; he thought that the argument of arms should be used against similar states and cognate peoples, but the argument of policy in dealing with barbarians.[1] He knew that the myriads of Xerxes had been defeated by the judgement of one man (Themistocles—again an appeal to ancient Greek history): 'where one can win by policy, what need is there for risks?' Well aware of this truth, he does not think it necessary to imitate the foolish and foolhardy: he prefers to secure himself against the attacks of barbarians by means of good policy. The result is that 'the Celts, the greatest and the fiercest of all men under the sun, who have often shown their daring in all sorts of ways, are now loyal to their lord and master: . . . all the people that lie to the East, beyond the Euphrates and Tigris, have been overcome, and are trained and taught to know their betters: the whole of the mainland is at peace, earth and sea crown their ruler, and both Greeks and barbarians now speak the same language.' With this the writer concludes his oration, borrowing as he does so ideas and phrases from the oration which Aelius Aristides had addressed to Rome (*Oratio* xxvi, § 100), and proclaiming that 'there is now full safety for every man to walk wherever he will, and all the harbours are now everywhere busy'. . . . This final section has a particularly Byzantine

[1] This distinction of the two types of policy to be pursued according to the two types of peoples concerned is particularly reminiscent of the argument of the *D Administrando Imperio*; see above, pp. 102–3.

ring, not only in its cult of policy, but also in the hyperbole of its style (though it must be admitted that the genuine Aristides could be almost as hyperbolical as his imitator); and the passage about the Celts and the peoples of the East beyond the Euphrates and the Tigris has a curious parallel in the writings of the Byzantine scholar Psellus, who lived in the eleventh century and played a great part in the revival of Greek studies which succeeded and farther developed the earlier Greek revival of the age of Photius.[1]

The question naturally arises whether there is any evidence that the orations of Aelius Aristides were known to, and imitated by, Byzantine scholars. They were certainly known and followed as models in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Nicephorus Chumnos (*circa* 1260–1330) used both Aristides and Isocrates as models for his essays in eloquence;[2] and Thomas Magister, in the same epoch, used the orations of Aristides in compiling a work on 'Attic names and words'.[3] But there is earlier evidence of the study of Aristides by Byzantine scholars. Early in the tenth century Arethas, a pupil of Photius and the archbishop of Caesarea, had a manuscript of the orations of Aristides copied for him (along with manuscripts of Euclid and Plato).[4] This is the earliest manuscript of the orations which we possess; but it contains only 31 of the 52 orations ascribed to Aristides, and the oration to an unknown king is not among them. The three oldest manuscripts which contain that oration are dated by Keil as belonging to the end of the tenth and to the eleventh century. It is perhaps a bold conjecture to suppose that the oration of the pseudo-Aristides addressed 'to a king' was unknown in the time of Arethas (*circa* A.D. 900); that it was composed at some date after that time; and that it was inserted afterwards in the later manuscripts. But it is possible, none the less, that until the eleventh century the canon of the writings of Aristides remained vague, and easily admitted the intercalation of a rhetorical exercise by a Byzantine scholar among the genuine orations. Byzantine scholars were inclined to write exercises in the style of ancient models (as Nicephorus Chumnos did in his day); and such an exercise might, in the absence of any

[1] Psellus boasted of his own teaching, 'We have made Celts and Arabs our captives' (see above, p. 132). It seems to have been a Byzantine commonplace to speak in this sweeping style of a universal diffusion, from the 'Celts' of the West to 'the peoples of the Euphrates and Tigris' (or the 'Arabs', or 'the boundaries of Babylon') in the East. It is the Byzantine equivalent of the medieval phrase 'from Babylon to Ghent' (which comes in one of the romances of Chrétien de Troyes), or again of Dr. Johnson's 'from China to Peru'.

[2] Krumbacher, *Byzantinische Litteraturgeschichte*, p. 480.

[3] Ibid., p. 549.

[4] Ibid., p. 524.

indication of authorship, insinuate itself among the writings of the author who was imitated.[1]

The grounds on which a Byzantine origin has here been suggested for the oration *eis basilea* may be summarized as follows. (1) The emphasis laid on the qualities of *philanthrōpia* and *eusebeia* is Byzantine in character; (2) the reference to the decay of Greek culture and to its revival by the king's patronage, which would be curious and inappropriate in the middle of the third century, fits naturally into Byzantine history; (3) the appeal to parallels from ancient Greek history would be curious and inappropriate in the days of the Roman Empire, but natural—and indeed a commonplace—in the days when the Byzantine Empire had become more and more Greek, and more and more conceived itself as resting on 'Hellenism'; (4) the preference of 'policy' to arms is a mark of Byzantine history rather than of the troubled times of the third century. These grounds receive further support from the facts (1) that the earlier manuscripts do not include the oration *eis basilea*, and that it appears for the first time in later manuscripts about the year 1100, and (2) that there is evidence to show that the genuine orations of Aristides were studied and imitated by Byzantine scholars. But it must be confessed that the general and unanimous verdict of scholars has hitherto been in favour of a third-century date for the oration. Professor Ensslin, for example, assigns it to the reign of the emperor Philip (A.D. 247), describing it as the work of a contemporary rhetorician, and setting it against the background of that reign. 'In this pamphlet is sketched, in clear contrast with the abuses of recent times, the ideal picture of the just ruler, equipped with the Stoic virtues, who should be above all a benevolent prince (*philanthrōpos basileus*) . . . .'[2] But 'the abuses of recent times' are the perennial abuses of misgovernment, which may be found in any age; and 'the

[1] It may be added, in further illustration of Byzantine interest in the writings of Aristides, (1) that Theodora, a niece of the emperor Michael VIII (1261–82), made a copy of the manuscript which had been prepared for Arethas, and (2) that a manuscript of the early fourteenth century, described by Keil as coming *e rhetorum Byzantinorum museo*, contains two interesting notes, one stating that 'this book, after having had many masters, became the property of Demetrius Cydones' (a rhetorician and essayist of the fourteenth century who lived in Thessalonica and Constantinople), and another adding, 'and it has become the much longed-for property of John Panaretos' (who may have been a member of a family living in Trebizond). It would thus appear that copies of the orations of Aristides went far afield and had a great vogue which could readily lead to imitation.

[2] *Cambridge Ancient History*, xii. 88–89, where the argument of Groag's article in *Wiener Studien* is adopted and followed, as it is also in Rostovtzeff's *Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, pp. 397–8.

Stoic virtues' are hardly the virtues of *philanthrōpia* which form the keynote of the oration. It remains, after all, a possibility, if only a possibility, that the pseudo-Aristides of the oration *eis basilea* was a Byzantine scholar.[1]

[1] The view of the oration of pseudo-Aristides here suggested not only goes against the general opinion of classical scholars and ancient historians, who—though they disagree among themselves about the emperor celebrated (and also about the author who celebrates him)—are all agreed in dating the oration in the third century A.D. It must also be admitted that there are difficulties in the way of regarding the oration as a Byzantine exercise in style: an attempt by a Byzantine scholar to depict in a classical manner some general 'idea' of the nature of a *basileus* as it hovered before his mind. (There is no indication in the oration of any particular or individual emperor: the person addressed is *a* king, an indeterminate *basileus*.) The chief objection which may be urged against such a view is the objection that a Byzantine scholar, belonging like all his fellows to the Orthodox Church, would not have written, as the author of the oration does, in pagan terms, and have spoken, as he does in two passages, of 'the Gods', or again (as he does in a third passage) of 'the fire of Demeter' and of its being 'brighter and more holy' under the reign of the king whom he celebrates. But, as has already been noted, the author also speaks in Byzantine terms of *philanthrōpia* and *eusebeia*, and of 'divine providence'; and a Christian writer in Byzantium might readily, in imitating a pagan author, adopt the language and phrases of his model and mix them with the language and phrases of his own time and belief, much as the Renaissance scholars of the West, in the course of the fifteenth century, mixed pagan terms and themes with the language of Christianity. The reference to the fire of Demeter and to its becoming brighter and more holy may well be nothing more than a conventional classical ornament, and the writer may be only intending to say (though he wears a 'learned sock' in saying it) that the crops will now be better and the earth will grow more fruitful.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

Some dates in the history of Byzantine politics, religion, and culture mentioned in or bearing on the text

(*Entries relating to the history of religion and culture are printed in italics*)

THE FOURTH CENTURY

324.	Foundation of Constantinople by Constantine I.
325.	*First General Council: Nicaea.*
381.	*Second General Council: Constantinople.*

THE FIFTH CENTURY

425.	*Foundation of a University at Constantinople by Theodosius II.*
431.	*Third General Council: Ephesus.*
451.	*Fourth General Council: Chalcedon.*

THE SIXTH CENTURY

500 (*circa*).	'*Dionysius the Areopagite*': his Celestial Hierarchy *and other works.*
527.	Accession of Justinian I.
529 onwards.	Codification of Roman law: Codex, Digest, Institutes, and later *Novellae* in supplement of the Codex.
529.	*Justinian I closes the Philosophical School at Athens.*
530 (*circa*).	*Agapetus*: Ekthesis Kephalaiōn parainetikōn . . . pros basilea.
550 (*circa?*).	*Dialogue* peri politikēs epistēmēs.
553.	*Fifth General Council: Constantinople.*
554 (*circa*).	Johannes Lydus: *De Magistratibus.*

THE SEVENTH CENTURY

600–50(?).	*Barlaam and Josaphat (a life of Buddha translated into a Christian form and into Greek).*
610.	Accession of Heraclius.
	Foundation during his reign of the œcumenical school at Constantinople on the initiative of the patriarch Sergius.
629.	Heraclius assumes the title *basileus* after his victory over Persia.
636.	Arabs conquer Syria.
641.	Arabs invade and by 650 are in possession of Egypt.
680–1.	*Sixth General Council: Constantinople.*

THE EIGHTH CENTURY

717. Accession of Leo III, the Isaurian.

726. The *Ecloga*, or selection of laws, published in Greek.

726–80. *The first period of the Iconoclastic controversy.*

730 (*circa*). *The three speeches or treatises of St. John of Damascus against the Iconoclasts.*

787. *The Seventh General Council: Nicaea.*

THE NINTH CENTURY

800 (*circa*). *Theodore Studites, abbot of the monastery of Studion in Constantinople.*

815–43. *The second period of the Iconoclastic controversy.*

850 (*circa*). *Caesar Bardas founds a school of higher learning in the Magnaura Palace. Photius one of the teachers, and twice patriarch* (858–67 *and* 878–86).

860 (*circa*). *Mission of Cyril* (*a pupil of Photius*) *and Methodius to the Slavs: Michael of Bulgaria* (*Boris I*) *baptized in* 864.

Dispute, and temporary schism, between the patriarch Photius and Pope Nicolas I (*Pope* 855–67).

867. Accession of Basil I (867–86) and beginning of the Macedonian dynasty.

880 (*circa*). Compilation of the *Epanagōgē*, an introduction to a reformed code of law.

The *Basilica*, or reformed code, issued in the reigns of Basil I and Leo VI.

886. Accession of Leo VI, the Wise (or the Philosopher).

The Book of the Eparch may belong to his reign, or to a later period (circa 969).

THE TENTH CENTURY

900 (*circa*). *Arethas archbishop of Caesarea, scholar and collector of manuscripts of the Greek classics.*

Nicolas Mysticus patriarch (901–7 *and* 911–25).

913. Accession of Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (913–59): *the compilations of his reign—De Administrando Imperio, De Ceremoniis, &c.*

949–50. *First visit of Liutprand bishop of Cremona to Constantinople: his description of the court ceremonial.*

963–9. Nicephorus Phocas emperor: *his anti-monastic policy: the* Philopatris *satirizes the monks.*

969–76. John Tzimisces emperor: *his censure by the patriarch Polyeuktes* (970).

976–1025. Reign of Basil II (*Bulgaroktonos*): zenith of Byzantine power.

THE ELEVENTH CENTURY

1034–41. Michael IV, the Paphlagonian (praised in the *De Officio Regis* of Niculitzas).

1045. *Foundation by Constantine IX Monomachus of schools of philosophy and law; Psellus the head of the school of philosophy, and Xiphilinus (afterwards patriarch)* nomophylax *of the law-school.*

1054. *Dispute and schism (but not final) between the patriarch Michael Cerularius* (1043–58) *and the legates of Pope Leo IX* (1049–54).

1070–80. *The* Strategicon *of Kekaumenos and the* De Officio Regis *of Niculitzas. Michael of Ephesus lectures and comments on the* Ethics *and* Politics *of Aristotle.*

1073–85. *The pontificate of Gregory VII*: plans for giving aid to the Byzantine Empire, which in 1071 had been heavily defeated by the Seljuk Turks at the battle of Manzikert.

1080 (*circa*). *An Indian collection of fables translated into Greek under the title* Stephanites and Ichnelates.

1081. Accession of Alexius Comnenus and beginning of the Comnenian dynasty.

1088–99. *The pontificate of Urban II*: the First Crusade (1096–1100).

THE TWELFTH CENTURY

1100 (*circa*). *Theophylact archbishop of Bulgaria: his* Institutio Regia.

1140 (*circa*). *Anna Comnena finishes her* Alexiad.

1143–80. Reign of Manuel I Comnenus.

1175 onwards. *Eustathius archbishop of Thessalonica: commentaries on Homer and Pindar.*

1180 (*circa*). *Commentaries and treatises on canon law of Theodore Balsamon.*

1198–1216. *Pontificate of Innocent III*: his relations with Constantinople.

THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY

1204. Latin conquest of Constantinople.

1204–59. The Lascarid dynasty at Nicaea: John III Vatatzes (1222–54) and Theodore II Lascaris (1254–8).

1254 (*circa*). *Nicephorus Blemmydes: his* Andrias Basilikos, *addressed to Theodore II.*

Georgius Acropolites: his funeral oration on John III.

1259. Accession of Michael VIII, and beginning of the Palaeologus dynasty.

1261. Recovery of Constantinople by Michael VIII.

1274. *Council of Lyons: attempted union of the Latin and Greek Churches.*

1282–1328. Reign of Andronicus II: *period of cultural activity.*

THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

1300 (*circa*). *Thomas Magister: his two treatises* peri basileias *and* peri politeias. *Theodorus Metochites, grand logothete: his* Miscellanea.

1340 (*circa*). *Barlaam, monk of Calabria, opponent of hesychasts and champion of philosophy.*

1341–55. John VI Cantacuzene: pretender to the throne and afterwards emperor.

1350 (*circa*). *Gregorius Palamas, leader of hesychasts and archbishop of Thessalonica.*

1342–50. The movement of the Zealots at Thessalonica: the accounts of it given by Nicolas Cabasilas and Nicephorus Gregoras.

1380 (*circa*). *Demetrius Cydones: translator of writings of St. Anselm, St. Thomas Aquinas, and other Latin authors.*

1391–1425. Reign of Manuel II Palaeologus.

1395. *The Patriarch Antonius writes to Vasili I of Russia in defence of the Byzantine empire.*

THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

1415 (*circa*). *The two Orations of Gemistus Plethon on the State of the Peloponnese, addressed to Manuel II and his son.*

1439. *Council of Florence: second attempted union of the Latin and Greek Churches.*

1440–70. *Bessarion, pupil of Plethon and Platonist; advocate of union of Churches; made cardinal* 1463.

1445 (*circa*). *Gemistus Plethon writes his treatise* On Laws.

1448. Accession of Constantine IX, the last Palaeologus emperor.

1453. Fall of Constantinople: *Gennadius Scholarius patriarch* (1453–9).

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